

Together Serving

At Huntly Baptist we have a bunch of 20-30 year olds who've been passionately serving their church and community for a number of years now. Over time the desire grew to venture across cultures and serve further afield.

Through our connections with Elliot Marshall we began discussions about what this venture could look like. Elliot had served with his family in Mexico before joining our church and the staff of WEC NZ. Putting our desire and WEC's expertise together led to the idea of helping solve some much needed maintenance issues at the WEC student hostel in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Like most great ideas, great challenges emerged. As we looked at the calendar we discovered significant obstacles and realised our time-frame for preparation was very short indeed. However, despite this and with much prayer, we excitedly sent a team of five under Elliot's direction to Thailand.

Arriving in time to avoid the seasonal smog, the team managed to paint the entire hostel, spend quality time with the students and help with regular duties. A bonus extension was even possible, to visit the WEC team working amongst the tribal Karen people.

As a church, we were proud to have sent this group, and value their willingness to drop everything and stretch themselves in order to help others. This is a wonderful reflection of God's work in them. We're



also grateful to the team at WEC NZ, who helped all this flourish. WEC willingly journeyed with us from inspiration to preparation and debriefing of our team. The impact of this trip has undeniably positively impacted the lives of those who went. It has taught us as a church too.

Perhaps the most prominent lesson was how vital the time before and after the trip is. Having WEC directly involved enabled us to learn so much from their expertise. Learning that it's not just about the trip and what we contribute, but more importantly about what God is doing in us (before, during and beyond the time), means the ongoing formation of our members and value of the trip will have a lasting impact beyond putting coats of paint on a wall.

Partnering with an experienced agency taught us so much more than we could have gained on our own. As individuals and as a church, we continue to learn more about ourselves as we each respond to Jesus' call to 'follow me'.

Nathan's married to Ariel and has three young kids. After completing theological studies at Eastwest College and Laidlaw College, he began working for Huntly Baptist Church, Waikato. Given opportunity Nathan also works as a musician in a variety of settings.

Nathan Lauridsen



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Spreading the Gospel where it's thinnest

Mission: No Solo Act

Another year. Another Star Wars prequel. This time round Han Solo gets an outing. A recruiting officer asks his name and people. "Han," he replies, with typical youthful swagger and bravado, "I don't have people. I'm alone."

Before long though, Han teams up with Chewbacca, and a key theme emerges; most galaxy-changing moments come from the combined strength of great alliances. In this, one of our favourite sagas, we see many colourful partnerships emerge.

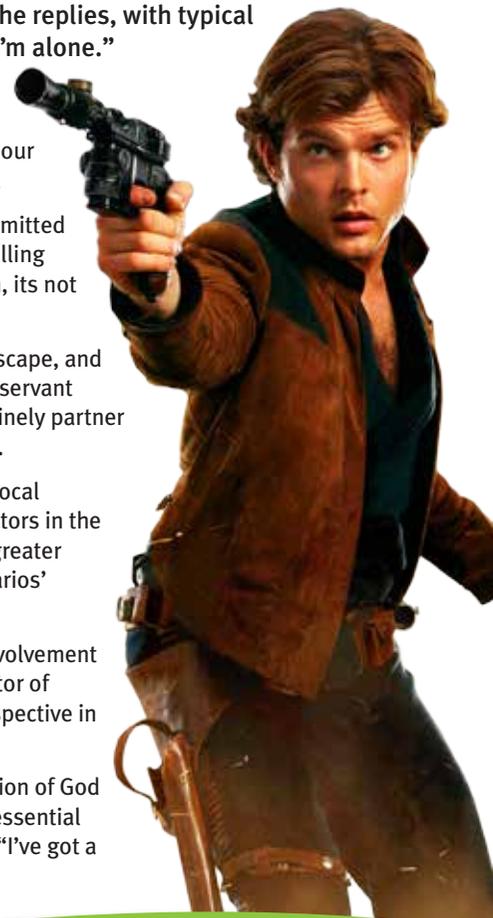
Warp speed back to reality. WEC has likewise long been committed to and convinced of the need for partnership. Mission is a calling for, to and about the whole body of Christ. Unlike young Han, its not a 'solo act.'

The dust has settled on a significantly changed mission landscape, and agencies like WEC have adjusted considerably; developing a servant posture that seeks to resource, equip, consult with and genuinely partner the Church in her mission vision and primary sender capacity.

We believe the interdependence and collaboration between local churches and mission agencies will continue to be critical factors in the next age of mission advance. As we look ahead then, with a greater sense of shared vision and values, what could 'win-win scenarios' look like?

In this edition, busy pastors with long histories of mission involvement describe their collaborations with WEC and others. The Director of Missions Interlink also brings a national and theological perspective in our Feature Article.

Encouragingly, engagement with and partnership in the mission of God has never been healthier. Perhaps Han Solo, the most quintessential Star Wars character of them all, got it right when he uttered, "I've got a good feeling about this!"



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Together Discerning

There's a lot we presume to know about the call of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1-3); perhaps more than might actually have happened. Was it a spontaneous prophetic word in a prayer meeting? Or was it more of a dialogue? We don't really know. Yet the call was unmistakable. There was a 'work' for which they were set apart and specifically called, and we are the fruit of their labour!



Importantly however, the call was to the church in Antioch as a whole, not just to these two men. There was a significant and substantial part to be played by the community they were part of. They were to 'set apart' or recognize Barnabas and Saul as called to a specific task, which included releasing them from their influential leadership role. They were to 'commend' them and bless their going, and then to receive them home and hear accounts of their work.

Acts 13 has shaped my understanding of global mission as a pastor of 40 years. Engaging with God's activity around the world has long been a strategy for effective local mission. As the saying goes: "The light that shines the farthest is brightest at its source!"

Discerning God's call upon a person's life is a community process. There's obviously revelation to an individual or couple, as they wrestle with a "nudge" from the Holy Spirit. But there's more to it than subjective personal intuition. Barnabas and Saul didn't merely inform their church about the 'call' they had received. The substance of the call came to the wider community. It was vetted and shared.

Like many pastors, I've seen lots of people embark upon a missionary call. Some do well. Others return home with their tails between their legs. My own journey might tend toward the latter, returning from Bangladesh

after only 2.5 years. Those that have been successful (short or long), are characterized by mutual submission to their church community in the whole discernment process. They've invited others (pastors, elders, mission committees) to critique their sense of the Lord's leading and to ask hard questions. Mission agencies do this as a matter of course, but there's a crucial role for a sending church to do the same.

Sadly, some enthusiastic mission agencies invite individuals to merely discern and follow as the Spirit leads; off they go on mission, laying subtle pressure on their home church to resource them. Those who do well characteristically allow the discernment to be caught by their church and its leaders. The resulting 'call' is held in partnership – with the individual, the agency they work with, and the local church back home who support them.

Brian Winslade currently serves as Senior Pastor, Hamilton Central Baptist Church. A pastor in Baptist Churches since 1979, he also served as the National Leader (CEO) Baptist Churches of NZ & NZ Baptist Missionary Society.



Brian Winslade

Together in our Global Village

I have a keen appreciation for the way that WEC is partnering with local churches to equip them for the mission that God is bringing to our doorsteps. Many of us have witnessed the huge influx of migrants over the last two decades. In 'little old Timaru' we have people from over 50 ethnic groups living here. They arrive keen to integrate into their new communities, yet often bewildered by the many challenges that lie before them. They are very open to friendships and help, particularly for the first 1-2 years before they settle into established patterns of life and relationships.

Late last year, the government initiated a pilot scheme to connect community organisations with refugee families. Our church has been accepted to sponsor a Syrian refugee family and to help them to integrate into our city.

It was very timely for us then, that a small enthusiastic team from WEC could come all the way to Timaru. Utilising their Glocal Workshops, they helped our church family to learn key principles in communicating across cultural barriers, and equipped us with insights into Islam, and how to build bridges with Muslims. They also ran a stimulating 'CSI Mission' programme to a combined group of youth here. This was effective in helping them to gain an appreciation for the challenges faced in communicating across cultures. It also gave them a clearer understanding of the needs that still exist among the least-reached people groups of our world.

I whole-heartedly recommend any church wanting to meet the deep needs of local migrants to invite WEC to help equip your church for the mission field that lies at your door.

The beneficial effects of sponsoring a Muslim family, who have lost everything through no fault of their own, have been huge. This lovely young family are not at all like the images continually thrown at us by the media. We've also become connected with a number of other community organisations in Timaru, passionate about helping



in this global humanitarian crisis in which we find ourselves. This is lifting the profile and feeling about our church in our city.

Christ calls us to be Good Neighbours in our Global Village, following the example of the Good Samaritan, who extended practical love without an agenda to someone who he had every reason to ignore. Many today fear Islam, but a wonderful way to overcome this fear is to get to know some Muslim people in your city, and help them in any way that you can - just because it is the Christ-like thing to do.



Mark has enjoyed being pastor of Gleniti Baptist since 2016. Together with Ann and his family, they also served in Ecuador (establishing sustainable guinea pig farms!) and in a Southeast Asian country, both of which they return to bi-annually.



Mark Pavelka

The Collaboration Conundrum

“...so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” (Romans 12:5). Sometimes when I read this verse I want to sarcastically respond, “Yeah, right! Surely Paul was saying this as an aspiration for the people of God more than an expectation?” But then I look elsewhere in Scripture and my heart sinks. No, this is supposed to be our reality. We are ONE people in Christ.



How are we meant to reconcile the apparent differences that seem to contradict our unity as a body? Furthermore, how can we move ahead more effectively on mission when perspectives between sending churches and mission service providers can seem so different at times? Attempts at collaboration can indeed present us with a conundrum - a challenging and complex problem.

At a recent gathering of mission organisations, the term “para-church” popped up, setting missions, outreach ministries and the like apart from local congregations. Some of the leaders present remarked afterwards that they had not heard that term for more than a decade. Do some church leaders still see this distinction as a problem? Apparently so.

Because of their global experience, most missions leaders have a broader theology of the body, the Kingdom of God, than leaders of churches, who typically have more localised concerns. Whether we are talking about what we usually call a “local church”, a generalised Christian organisation like a mission agency, the sum of the people of God within a nation, or each of us as individuals, we have all been given a unique deposit of God’s grace to contribute to God’s mission (see Rom 12:6). Whether as individuals or institutions, we do well not to judge the grace of God given to others and the call of God they are following. As Jesus said to Peter concerning John’s destiny, “...what is that to you? You must follow me” (John 21:22).



Collaboration is the term most often used these days to discuss how different ‘bodies’ should work together. Technically, it means ‘working with others to achieve something’ - a common activity that results in some sort of outcome. When it comes to the collaboration of local churches with mission agencies to advance the mission of God, it’s usually because of a common objective - things like preparing and caring for the church’s members on mission, or helping to provide resources to recipients beyond the church’s normal operational reach.

Thanks to technological and transportation advancements since the 1970s the world has become much more accessible. It’s now easy for people from a local church to take a trip, build a partnership, adopt a project or “fall in love” with a group of people they stayed with on a two-week short-term trip. It’s now also too easy to underestimate the complexity of cross-cultural ministry. Nevertheless, some churches dare to attempt it on their own. It usually doesn’t take them long to realise that their idealism has led them into deeper waters than they expected. In contrast, most mission organisations operating out of Aotearoa New Zealand have at least half a century of cross-cultural expertise to draw on, some over a century.

Mission organisations have a great deal of practical resource to offer. But it’s not without cost. What some might see as unnecessary hindrance, missions see as necessary caution to avoid a shipwreck in those deeper waters. Furthermore, churches and missions can have quite different expectations of timing, outcomes, support requirements, decision making, funding etc., which creates the conundrum. To avoid disaster in the long-term it’s far better to work together - but it’s not easy.

Nowhere in the Bible does it suggest that being one is easy. In fact, James declared that maintaining unity was a trial, a testing, a temptation even. We can read James and imagine he’s referring to external persecution or the wiles of this world, when he’s actually speaking of tensions that arise within the fellowship of believers. He says, “consider it pure joy when you face trials of many kinds” (James 1:2). Joy comes from the expectation of a positive outcome (see Hebrews 12:2). As James goes on to say, “you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:3-4).

We need to reprioritise what we hope to achieve as we collaborate in God’s mission. Neither people disciplined, nor projects accomplished, nor communities transformed should be the priority. They are all good, but secondary concerns. The maturity of the people of God must become the overriding objective of Christian collaboration - to be made perfect and complete, like the victorious Jesus. If we can maintain that perspective - growth of the whole body as the body works together - we will overcome the collaboration conundrum.

Yes, we are one body, whether that’s expressed within a congregation worshipping and fellowshiping together, or as a diverse group of people set apart for mission beyond the bounds of our respective congregations. Each part of the body has a role to play, supplying the rest of the body with much needed nourishment and exercise for sustained growth. And it’s a global body, even though we only experience that in part. Christ is at work in this massive global organism to bring it to some semblance of maturity for His return. We cannot know what that will look like in reality but we do know that it will look like unity, each part doing what we are designed and gifted to do. After all, Jesus said it would (only) be through our unity that the world will know and believe that the Father lovingly sent the Son (John 17:21-23). As members of churches and other Christian organisations engage in Holy Spirit led collaboration, let us strive to “keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3).

Jay Matenga serves as the Director of Missions Interlink (NZ), as well as one of four Associate Directors for the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission. With his wife Pauline, Jay started out in mission training at WEC’s Worldview College of Intercultural Studies in Tasmania and served with WEC NZ 1995-2000.

Jay Matenga



SITsvacant

Bookkeeper / Treasurer – New Zealand

Description: Provide strategic oversight of WEC NZ’s finances, with accountability to the Branch as a whole for how funds are distributed and spent. Ensure the funds are managed in accordance with WEC’s financial ethos and legal integrity. Responsibilities include: distribute funds to overseas workers; write and update financial policy; oversee bookkeeping and banking; monitor the Branch’s overall financial position; administer the branch’s cash flow; and budget finances to meet current and future needs.

Qualifications: Past experience in accounting and bookkeeping. Ability to manage and budget, fluent in English.

Mission Mobiliser – New Zealand

Description: Inspire churches and individuals to get involved in mission. Work in a team environment and be responsible for increasing mission awareness. Visit churches, Bible schools, missions conferences etc, to mobilise Christians toward mission. Organise publicity and integrate returning missionaries and those home on furlough into recruitment opportunities.

Qualifications: Interest in crosscultural ministry, recruitment; desire to build relationships and serve the church in NZ; self motivated with good communication skills.

Love Jesus, Have time?

We need people who can work with our team, to help create and develop advertising and social media content – inspiring the next generation to reach past their doors. We are also looking for people who can help in practical ways: gardening, housekeeping, painting, cleaning and maintenance.

If you are in the Hamilton/South Auckland/Waikato region, there is opportunity for volunteers to help at the WEC Aotearoa New Zealand centre in Gordonton. Whether it’s a couple of hours a week/ fortnight or a day a month - whatever time you have to offer, we would love to have a chat.

Visit www.wecnz.org to check out the full Opportunities Database, or call us on 0800 46 46 86 to explore the options.

More Info

NZoutlook

Stories of WEC’s progress in reaching the unreached people of our world are stories of partnership. WEC’s partnership with 86 churches throughout New Zealand demonstrates its commitment to have the whole church (sending church, workers and mission agency) taking the whole gospel to the whole world.

Powerful partnerships often begin when a potential new worker approaches WEC with an ongoing conversation about the vision or sense of call God has given them. The friendship grows deeper and more powerful when the new worker can confidently say, “My church affirms and are with me in this vision.”

Effective three-way partnerships (worker, church and WEC), then create a synergistic partnership team. In our case, this combination of partners covenanted together in reaching the unreached and planting effective churches produces a synergy – energy coming from different sources to fulfil common goals.

Do the possibilities excite you as much as they do us? Interested in the way forward? If so, begin a conversation with your church leader about your growing call to cross-cultural ministry. Then come and widen the conversation with our mobilisers. At every step of the journey, be it preparation, equipping or sending, all three groups will talk and walk forward together. Partnering is the vital energy source fueling the stories of progress that we hear back from teams in every part of the world.



Linda has served in a ministry working with marginalized people and is now based in Gordonton providing Member Care for 60+ globally based cross-cultural NZ workers.



Linda

Short Term Mission

Inspired by the stories here? Keen to step out and contribute for a defined period? Join a group of people journeying with Jesus, discovering their role in God’s mission.

Upcoming Team Treks (led by WEC staff)

- The Balkans (Jan 28th- Feb 16th 2019)
- South East Asia (June/July 2019)
- Middle East (Sept 29th – Oct 12th 2019)

Whether it’s just yourself or a group from church, WEC teams are hunting for literally 100’s of short-termers who can serve for anything from 2 weeks to 12 months.

Contact the Trek Team for details or more possibilities: 0800 GO INTO (46 46 86)



Together Preparing & Training

In July a team from our church, PCF in Auckland, had the amazing opportunity to travel to Fiji to participate in kids’ programmes, service projects and outreach with Fijian Indian Hindus and Muslims. We were based in Waidamudamu, a desperately poor community about 20 mins from Suva City.

We knew our team needed to learn how to meaningfully connect with the locals, people so different to ourselves. To help us in our preparation we made a quick request on WEC NZ’s Facebook page. They were great! We were soon in touch with their mobilising team, who listened to our needs and spent time working with us to come up with the right training.

Seeing the extent of the material, we opened up the training to anyone in church who was having their heart stirred. Ross, Eric and Marcelo ran three workshops for an extremely varied group of participants. Their knowledge of cultures and other faiths, interspersed with first-hand experiences and shared in an easy to grasp format, made for some great sessions.

WEC was a genuine partner in our Fiji mission. So many times we were in situations where we were able to put our training into action. The surprising thing is that now we’re back, we feel better equipped in our day to day interactions with our neighbours of other cultures and faiths. It’s opened our eyes more to the people all around us, who we now find regular opportunities with.

As we learned, mission is from anywhere to everywhere, even our neighbourhood and the other side of the street. So don’t wait to board a plane or for a mission trip to take advantage of WEC’s training. If you’re looking to be more effective here or there, give them a call!



Diana (pictured on left) together with her husband Ken Hutchinson pastor Pakuranga Christian Fellowship in Auckland. Beyond their own connections they also relate with our WEC Pasifika team in Fiji.