



## Book Reviews

Allan K. Davidson (ed.), *Living Legacy: A History of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland* (Auckland: Anglican Diocese of Auckland, 2011), pp. 432, ISBN 978-0-473-18031-7 (hbk).

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The diocese of Auckland is the oldest, the largest and the most diverse in the Anglican Church in New Zealand, with almost 40 per cent of the nation's population living within its borders. Many of its members have left their mark on the world outside the church, notably in politics, the law and education. A major figure of the recent past was Sir Paul Reeves (d. 2011), bishop from 1979 to 1985, who was Governor-General of New Zealand from 1985 to 1990 and later Anglican Observer at the United Nations.

The diocese has embraced two distinct streams. There is the Maori church planted by English missionaries of the Church Missionary Society at the Bay of Islands in the far north of New Zealand in 1814 and there is the church that was brought by white (Pakeha) settlers, mostly from England, who in 1840 founded what is now the city of Auckland. The diocese of New Zealand, created in 1841 with G.A. Selwyn as its first bishop, embraced both churches. The original diocese of New Zealand was gradually reduced in size through the formation of new dioceses in other parts of the country and in 1869 Selwyn's successor, W.G. Cowie, became the first bishop of Auckland. When the diocese was founded the membership of the Anglican Church in New Zealand was overwhelmingly Maori. However, as immigrants poured into New Zealand from the 1840s onwards – so that by the 1860s Pakeha outnumbered Maori – the diocese and its structures became dominated by settler concerns while the Maori church was pushed to the margins of diocesan life, almost invisible to Pakeha Anglicans. In the early twentieth century the stipend of Maori clergy was less than a third of a Pakeha stipend. Maori dissatisfaction with this Pakeha-dominated church, first erupting in the 1960s, led to the rejection of assimilationist assumptions and the recognition of biculturalism. In 1992 the New Zealand General Synod adopted a revised constitution in which the Maori church (Te Pihopatanga) became a self-governing body, with its own bishops, in partnership with the Pakeha and Pacific Islander streams.

To produce a one-volume history of this complex diocese is, both intellectually and politically, a demanding task. The editor is Allan Davidson who has an honoured place among historians of Christianity in New Zealand. For this project he assembled an accomplished team, embracing both established scholars in the field and some younger voices, and including Anglican clergy who know the church in Auckland from within and historians from other religious backgrounds. The question of how to approach the history of the Maori church – integration or

separate treatment – led to a decision to allocate three of the ten chapters to the Maori church. As the authors were Pakeha, this in turn raised the question of who should write history that involves Maori. ‘Attempts were made’, Davidson tactfully observes, ‘not always successfully, to negotiate these difficulties’.

The sources for this study are rich. Unlike many other dioceses in Australia and New Zealand, Auckland is fortunate to have diocesan archives under professional management. The editor has also been able to draw upon several major collections of artistic and photographic records. The illustrations used in this work are outstanding, both for their range – they embrace cartoons as well as colonial watercolours – and for their capturing of the feel of church life in each era. The value of the book as a reference work has been enhanced by some useful maps, a comprehensive bibliography and a 30-page list of bishops, parishes and their clergy, missionary clergy, diocesan officers, chaplains, and members of religious communities and the Church Army.

The structure of *Living Legacy* is chronological while avoiding the pitfall of treating the episcopate of each bishop as a separate entity. Through regular meetings of contributors and the circulation of drafts, the chapters interlock well, without overlap, and there is continuity in the major themes. The authors have balanced, mostly with success, the ways that successive bishops have shaped the diocese, church extension, parish life and church organizations, diocesan administration and finances (an area which church historians too often bypass), the social service work of the diocese, church schools, notable clergy and lay leaders (with equal attention given to women and men), and the diverse expressions of Anglicanism in different places and regions. Importantly this is not a bland story of achievement and success. The authors do not gloss over tensions and controversies within the diocese and the statistical evidence of numerical decline in a rapidly expanding city and region. The hint of scandal that surrounds the sudden resignation of Bishop Crossley in 1913 – and in this area conventional church records often have mysterious gaps – is treated judiciously. This is an excellent diocesan history: a comprehensive and insightful account of the origins, development and present shape of Anglicanism in northern New Zealand.

As one who grew up in Auckland in the 1940s and 1950s I recognized the portrait of what was then a theologically homogeneous (centre-to-high) and rather insular diocese. It is hard now to recapture the religious optimism of that time. In 1966 the number of Christmas communicants reached their peak and Anglicans comprised a third of the population. Everyone expected that the church of the future would be much as it was but bigger and better. Since then, Auckland has become a multicultural city while the diocese has undergone major changes and challenges, experiencing virtually every movement and trend within the Anglican Communion to a greater extent than comparable dioceses in Australia: radical theology, the charismatic movement, ecumenism (but without church union), a renewed interest in social issues (with occasional flashes of radical activism), and the need to create new forms of ministry in places where the churchgoing population is no longer able to maintain inherited structures. The diocese first admitted women to the priesthood in 1977, without much opposition, whereas in Australia this occurred only after another 15 years of intense debate and tension. Evangelicals – virtually invisible in the 1950s – have grown in numbers and

influence, though the overall theological outlook of the diocese is moderately liberal. In 2011 the synod voted against the proposed Anglican Covenant.

This history points towards several areas that deserve fuller exploration. One is the changes that have occurred at the local level since the colonial period in Anglican worship, music and church furnishings. Alongside this is the role of the Anglican Church as a patron of the arts, in church interior decoration and stained glass, and the use of local images and symbols. Another area is the personal experience of growing up an Anglican in northern New Zealand and the transmission of Anglican piety and identity. We need more first-hand accounts and recollections, Maori and Pakeha. Perhaps every diocesan history project in future should include an oral history programme.

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Stephen Pickard, *In-Between God* (Hindmarsh, South Australia: ATF Theology, 2011), pp. 276, ISBN: 978192181706.  
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There are not many theologians in the world today, and writing about contemporary ecclesiology, who can match Stephen Pickard's wisdom, insight and prescience. A former Assistant Bishop in Adelaide, and an established theological educator known widely across the Anglican Communion, Pickard is one of the best-placed writers in the world to commentate on the state of the church today. He combines humility and depth in his writing, and the resulting *In-Between God* may prove to be his finest work yet.

The book is divided into three tight sections, each of which will repay careful attention and reflection. The first part explores theology and the rhythms of faith, with chapters examining uncertainty, religion and trust; the Trinitarian dynamics of belief; the ways of theology – and with insights from the Antipodes; and evangelism and theology in dialogue. Pickard writes with a freshness and flair. But the currents run deep, and the distilled wisdom that comes from the fruit of more than three decades in ministry is more than apparent. One of Pickard's great gifts to the church is to be able to see, interpret and reframe ecclesiology in a three-dimensional way. He handles the church well in his writing, picking it up one way, then another; looking at it this way, then that. He is a skilled ecclesial exegete, and an insightful interpreter of faith.

The second part of the book is a more explicit exploration of ecclesiology. Entitled 'Church: Finding Community in a Disturbed World', chapters engage with the recovery of a sense of place (down-under); innovation, un-decidability and patience; and the new monasticism and the future church. This section of the book is, in many respects, the most remarkable. Pickard has done a great service to the Anglican Communion in recent years by lecturing, preaching and writing on the virtue of un-decidability – the practice of a deep wisdom of patience. In a world that often demands certainty and (relatively instant) decisions. Un-decidability is a great gift