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## Kia ora tātou,

Last year's inauguration of Matariki as a new public holiday naturally raises questions for all Christians in New Zealand whether we may celebrate this festival without compromising the first of the ten commandments: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). So this year we invited Brad Haami (Ngāti Awa), a Māori Christian leader, author, and lecturer (at Laidlaw College) to give us some guidance...

## Mā te Atua koutou e tiaki e manaaki i ngā wa katoa

*May the Lord bless and keep you at all times*

**Dr Stuart Lange**

*National Director*

**Gayann Phillips**

*General Manager*

and the NZCN team



The heavens declare the glory of God and  
the skies declare the handiwork of God.

PSALM 19:1

## Celebrating God at Matariki

Matariki is a cluster of stars that rises on the eastern horizon in the early morning winter sky in New Zealand. It's a sign of the winter solstice and is now marked as a holiday for all New Zealanders. Matariki means 'tiny eyes' or 'eyes of God'.

Reading the stars was only one set of tools the ancestors used to navigate across the Pacific Ocean to Aotearoa. The stars also functioned as indicators of the seasonal cycles of the flowering and fruiting of trees, bird feeding times, planting and harvest times and the migration of marine and freshwater fish. The stars had a lot to do with survival.

The dawn rising of Matariki in winter indicated the completion of harvest and storage and directed people to look forward to the conditions for the new planting season. It was also a time to memorialise those loved ones that had passed away during the previous year and to contemplate learnings from the past year and to look to the future.

As a follower of Jesus living in Aotearoa, how are we to participate in this celebration in a meaningful way without diluting our Christian faith?

Recall what the Bible says about the stars and seasons. The stars are there to glorify God. They are not themselves to be glorified, or be given homage or worshipped. We are called to praise God the Creator of the stars, not to praise

creation. The heavenly bodies were created by God and delegated authority to give light, to separate light from darkness and to act as seasonal indicators.

In Genesis 1:14-19 we read how God assigns lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years. Then God made the sun and the moon to rule in the day and the night and He made the stars also. And God saw that it was good.

In Deuteronomy 4:19 the people are called not to bow down to the stars. In Psalm 19:1 it says the heavens declare the glory of God and the skies declare the handiwork of God. Psalm 148 calls the heavens, the stars, the moon and the sun to praise the Lord.

In the New Testament the Wise Men follow and read the stars to find the location of the new-born king in Bethlehem. Matthew 16:3 sees Jesus rebuke those who can read the seasonal indicators of earth and sky but are unable to read the signs of the present time.

Both Māori and Christian tradition speak of the role of the heavenly bodies in similar and also in different ways.

So, taking all of this into consideration, can churches in New Zealand observe Matariki? If you ask me, yes, but with a different emphasis in regard to God.

As an example, some of us attend a kapa haka festival in Rotorua at this time of the year, named Te Kaihanga o ngā whetū (The creator of the stars). Groups from churches all around NZ come to praise God in the expression of kapa haka. We have woken at dawn, located Matariki and other stars in the morning sky, glorified God the Creator of the stars with praise, broken bread together, and contemplated the present days to come.

Let us celebrate God at this period of time to praise Him, and to display the manifold wisdom of God to the powers and principalities in the heavens (Ephesians 3:10).

~ Brad Haami ~



### [NZ Christian Leaders' Congress](#)

19-21 September in Auckland

An opportunity for Christian leaders from across the country to meet and confer on some key matters affecting NZ church and society. **All Christian leaders are welcome.**

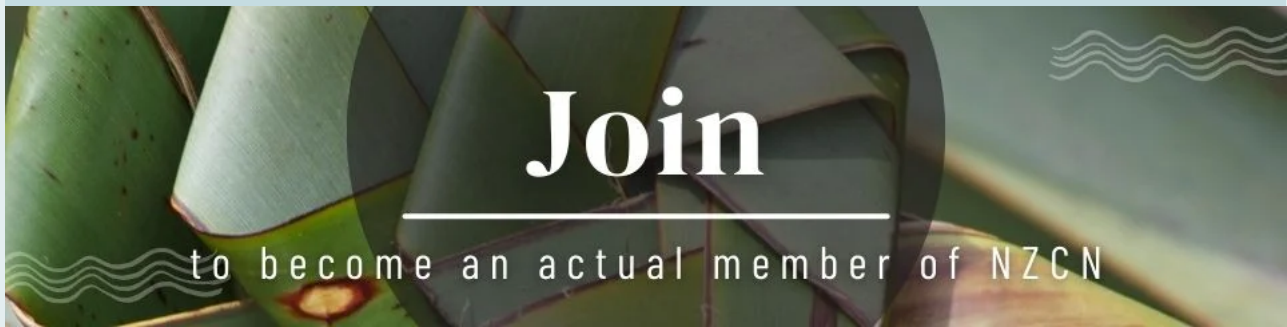
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### **BECOME AN ACTUAL MEMBER OF NZCN**

Individuals, couples, churches, and Christian organisations may all officially join NZCN. Becoming a member carries some benefits (see [here](#)), but is primarily

about making a statement that you are firmly committed to biblical Christianity and to working together with other Christians.

**Not sure if you're already a member?** [Click here](#) and if you can't log onto the site, chances are you aren't currently a member. You might have a customer account to manage purchases, but members can watch Te Rongopai online.





How often do you want to hear from us?

☐ Weekly, even if it's just notices. I like to know what's going on.

☐ Only when there is a message i.e. an editorial or article(s).



Bay of Plenty: Western Bay, Eastern Bay, Tauranga, and Rotorua

James Muir will fill us in on the background of the region and about various projects and ways we can help support them in prayer.





Join us between 8-9pm on Monday

Last week...

Prayer points available in the video description



Pray As One NZ

Every Monday night, from 8-9pm, we run a national prayer meeting on Zoom with 70-80 participants joining from throughout the nation. [Come join us!](#)





## Directory of members

Helping to build awareness of different parachurch organisations serving the church in New Zealand and overseas.



## Job Board / Situations Vacant

Connecting people for employment, internships, or voluntary roles in Christian organisations and churches. This can include looking for people to join governance boards or to fill a need for a specific skill/project.

# Employment Opportunities

Listed on our [Job Board](#) by our Church and Christian Organisation members

**\*Denotes a new or recently re-listed opportunity\***



### Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship

Dunedin, Wellington & Auckland – nation-wide  
(part & full-time options available)

**\*Staff Workers\***



### Mangapapa Union Parish

Gisborne – Tairāwhiti (full-time)

**\*Church Leader Minister/Pastor\***



### Replenish Respite and Healing Trust

Okuku, North Canterbury (full-time)

**Retreat Centre Hosts – Residential**



### Baptist Churches of New Zealand

Penrose, Auckland (part-time)

**Finance Coordinator**

**Administration Coordinator**



### Rhema Media Inc

Auckland CBD (full-time)

**Data & Communications Specialist**

**Media Sales – New Business Development**

**Sales Support Coordinator**



**Raumati Beach Church**  
Raumati Beach, Kapiti Coast (*full-time*)

[Lead Pastor](#)



**Tasman Church**  
Nelson Bays (*part-time*)

[Church Administrator](#)



**Dignity Freedom Network New Zealand**  
New Zealand (*part-time*)

[DFN National Co-ordinator](#)



**Christian Community Churches of New Zealand**  
(*full-time*)

[Regional Enabler: Lower North Island](#) anywhere

[National Youth and Young Adult Enabler](#) anywhere

[National Administrator](#) Palmerston North

[Events & Promotions Manager](#) Palmerston North



**The Runway Foundation**  
Pukekohe, Auckland (*part-time*)

[ADDventurers Kids Club Facilitator & Youth Support](#)



**Mission Without Borders**  
Auckland (*contract*)

[Marketing and Fundraising Coordinator](#)



**Hillcrest Chapel**  
Hamilton (*part-time*)

[Youth Pastor](#)



**Alpha NZ**  
Auckland (*part-time*)

[Events Lead](#)



**mainly music**  
Hutt Valley (*part-time*)

[Session Facilitator for mainly music sessions](#)



### MiCamp Trust

Taupo & Whakamaru (*full-time*)

[Head Instructor](#) – Taupo

[Grounds/Maintenance Position](#) – Taupo

[MiCamp Whakamaru Site Manager](#)



### Jireh Christian School

Avondale, Auckland (*part-time*)

[Maintenance Person](#)



### Christchurch Community Church

Minister primarily to, and reach out to, second and third generation Asians living in NZ, and to the wider English-speaking Community

[Encounter Congregation Leader/Pastor](#) – *full-time*



## Event Calendar


**Numbers in brackets indicate the number of events currently listed in that category until the *end of November*.**

Some events have both online and in person options to attend.

## Featured conference

THINKING MATTERS  
**Conference 23** - DNDN  
Defend Faith. Navigate Culture. Reach People.

DUN EDIN



*Dan Paterson*

FOUNDER AND CEO | QUESTIONING CHRISTIANITY | BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

GET SOLID ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

7 PM - 9.30 PM FRIDAY 28 JULY  
9 AM - 5.30 PM SATURDAY 29 JULY

Dunedin Other locations



# Events

Listed on our [Calendar](#) by our Church and Christian Organisation members



## OAC Evangelist Fellowship Conference

22 Aug – El Rancho, Waikanae Beach

UNDERSTANDING WORLD VIEWS

Guilt? Shame? Power?

We all see the world differently so how do we reach those we don't understand? Join us as we look into the way different people groups perceive the gospel and gain an understanding on how best to reach them.



## GOVERNANCE

WHAT IS FRUITFUL STEWARDSHIP?

**SPEAKERS**



REV. FRANCIS (FRANK) RITCHIE  
Lead Chaplain  
Media Chaplaincy NZ



VEN. DR. LYNDON DRAKE  
Archdeacon of  
Tāmaki Makaurau



KIRSTEN (KP) PATTERSON  
Chief Executive  
Institute of Directors



JENNY COLLINGS  
National Director  
Christian Medical  
Fellowship of NZ



STEVEN MOE  
Partner  
Parry Field Lawyers

CHRISTCHURCH  
AUG 30  
WED

AUCKLAND  
SEP 06  
WED

WELLINGTON  
SEP 13  
WED

**HOSTS**



CHRIS CLARKE  
CEO  
Wilberforce



DAN MAZENGARB  
CEO  
Christian Savings



AS PARTNERED WITH  
WILBERFORCE  
Parry Field  
Lawyers

Event website

Register now!



## Maxim Institute | Sir John Graham Lecture 2023

15 September – Auckland CBD

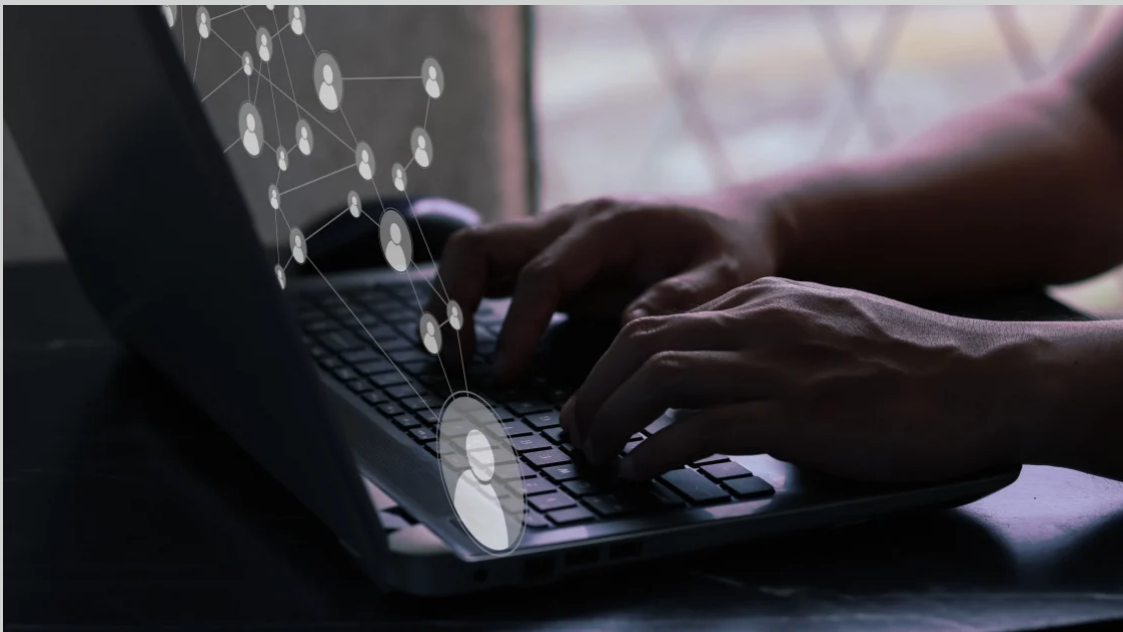
**REBUILDING TRUST | POPULISTS, ELITISTS, AND THE FUTURE OF OUR DEMOCRACY**

**Trust** has declined steadily in the developed world over some decades; more sharply in recent years.

The great economic and socially liberal consensus of post-WW2 governments has shattered, exposing a political climate that is increasingly fevered and volatile.

Over a banquet dinner, in the 2023 Sir John Graham Lecture, Associate Professor Tom Simpson will explore whether our future is one of increasing polarisation, or whether a new consensus can be forged, with trust at its core.

Would you like to have your organisation featured in our newsletter, post employment opportunities on our job board, or list events on our calendar?



You can! These are benefits we make available to Christian organisations and churches with current membership

[Click here to learn more](#)



# Help spread the news...

New Zealand society is in a period of significant change, much of it away from the Christian faith and values. Christian voices in society are either ignored or scorned.

We need Christian voices which are positive, sensible, reasoned, well-informed, and clear.

Forward to a friend



## **NZ Christian Network**

PO Box 16004, Sandringham, Auckland 1351

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