

# FROM A LOFT



AUGUST 2006



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings to you all.

Our Graduation Ceremony this year was a time of celebration. You will read elsewhere in this issue about our graduates and something of what it has meant for them to have studied with EIDTS.

In addition to those who are shown in this newsletter Margaret Donald also graduated in 2005 and will have her LTh conferred at our graduation ceremony next year.

It was good to have friends and family of the graduates sharing in this celebration and in particular to have family members who had travelled especially from Australia.

However we were sorry that having made the trip to Christchurch Jennifer Groves father then became ill and was hospitalised and was unable to be present at the graduation. We were saddened to hear that he died in Christchurch Hospital a few days later. We extend our sympathy to Jennifer and her family.

Professor Paul Trebilco of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Otago University was our graduation speaker. A number of people asked if it would be possible to have copies of his address and Professor Trebilco graciously agreed to have that put on our Website. If you would like to read that you can go to our Website ([www.eidts.ac.nz](http://www.eidts.ac.nz)) and you will find it clearly indicated there.

Over the years EIDTS has aimed to make its courses available at the lowest possible cost. We are aware that many of our students are not in a position to pay high fees and we want to make our courses available to as many people as possible. However after some ten years without any fee increase we now find that we need to increase our fees in 2007 in order to meet our rising costs. Whilst we regret having to take this step we have tried to keep the increase to a minimum.

Whilst we remain a distance education provider we do get positive feedback from students who attend residential schools as part of their course. With this in mind we have decided to introduce a residential school in 2007 that will help students who are at the beginning of their study. We hope that in this way we will

be able to offer some "face-to-face" encouragement to students at the outset of their courses.

Our students are now well into their study for this year. This year we have over 120 students studying for 180 courses. These figures are slightly higher than in recent years -- which we find encouraging. We hope that this also reflects a continuing confidence in our courses and in the LTh qualification.

Bruce Hansen



## CLARICE GREENSLADE

We were sorry to hear of the death of Clarice Greenslade on the 16 May. Clarice had been ill for some time and had borne her suffering with the same quiet dignity and faith by which she had lived her life. She has been a dear friend and a spiritual mentor to many of us at EIDTS. We will miss her gentle smile, her wisdom, her quick and searching comment, and her deep love and care for all whom she met. For many of her students she was the one who opened for them the "windows of their soul."

It was our former Director Margaret Wood who recruited Clarice as a tutor for EIDTS in the L.Th. paper "History of Christian Spirituality". That was a subject dear to Clarice's heart and she taught it for a number of years. Clarice started as a Tutor when courses were taped and the material posted to students. Those who did the course with Clarice will remember the gentle voice reflecting at depth on some of the great writers on spirituality. Clarice loved talking about these people and spoke of them as her friends. In a real sense that is what they were to her. That same characteristic of deep spiritual thinking was also part of Clarice's wider ministry. She studied theology at St John's College in Auckland long before she was ordained, and then undertook post-graduate studies at Durham University. After ordination in the early '80s she became vicar of the Mt Herbert parish on Banks Peninsula and later a Canon of Christchurch Cathedral. Clarice made a significant contribution to the work of EIDTS and after her retirement continued to attend the graduations to show her support for the students, tutors and Board.

We extend our sympathies to Clarice's family and friends.

**Bill Bennett**

**Bill** is a product of the East Coast of the North Island. He was born in Dannevirke where his father was a farmer. The family later moved to Hastings and then to Havelock North and more recently Bill has spent his years in ministry within the Anglican Diocese of Waiapu.

Bill attended Sunday School and Bible Class at the Havelock North Anglican parish. He attended Hastings High School and it was at the conclusion of his High School years that he felt a strong sense of call to ordained ministry.

Bill attended Canterbury University and St John's Theological College in Auckland.

He was appointed curate in Tauranga and then vicar at Clive, Waerenga-ahika (now Waipaoa) near Gisborne, Te Puke, Dannevirke and Westshore in Napier. Bill also served at the Napier Cathedral and had times in the Norwich and Lichfield Dioceses in the United Kingdom.

Bill will be remembered by most of us for his ten years as Ministry Enabler in the Waiapu Diocese. It was here that he developed his interest in Rural Ministry and published his work in prayer and liturgy.

In his "retirement" Bill has continued his work as priest-in-charge in three parishes, along with a continuing interest in and commitment to te reo Maori.

Bill's S.Th Dissertation is entitled "God of the Whenua: A Study of Rural Ministry in Aotearoa New Zealand". It arises out of and represents his passion and commitment to Rural Ministry. This work has now been published and has attracted very positive and affirming reviews.

*Of his studies for the S.Th Bill says:*

*\* to my knowledge no one had tried to write an overview of rural ministry in NZ.*

*\* in my role as Tutor with EIDTS I have been impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm of those who do the Rural Ministry Studies paper. They have to explore many facets of the community in which they live. How they see themselves and their congregation in the ministry of the Church becomes a challenge. How is God at work in the place where they live, not only with relation to the land and community, but also with regard to local history, Maori and Pakeha cultural perceptions and other factors*

*\* also I enjoyed gathering my own experiences with the rural church, a community of faith which I continue to find wonderfully supportive and encouraging, prepared to take risks even when they feel very unsure of the outcomes*

*•there is great opportunity for continued theological dialogue between Maori and Pakeha as we both come to terms with our land, the way we use it and sustain it. I hope this conversation will continue to grow.*

**Richard Spence**

**Richard** trained as a teacher and taught mathematics and physics in Napier. He later taught computer studies and is a pioneer of computer education in New Zealand and has been a visiting scholar at universities in France, the United States of America and in the People's Republic of China.

Richard holds degrees in Science and Education from Victoria University in Wellington and a PhD and Diploma in Business Administration from Massey University.

Richard also attended the St John's Theological College in Auckland for a time and in 1999 was awarded an L.Th. by the Ecumenical Institute of Distance Theological Studies.

He has felt called to combine his talents and qualifications in science and theology through an interest in a bi-vocational ministry. Richard was ordained ten years ago into this style of ministry.

He has held positions as a Senior Lecturer in Business Systems at Massey University and as Corporate Services Manager with the Napier City Council. He is the author of a number of books and has published articles and academic papers in his fields of expertise.

Richard has exercised his ministry as priest-assistant in a suburban parish while carrying out his secular employment and for four years worked as a priest in secular self-employment. Out of this experience Richard developed his study of "Priests in Secular Employment" and considered those issues in his Dissertation for the Scholar in Theology.

*Of his study Richard says:*

*The S.Th. programme provided me with the opportunity and encouragement to develop a number of themes which had been rattling around in my head (and my heart) for years. Not only would that clarify my own thinking but also answer the wishes of the significant number of people who had commented over the years that 'This is important. Somebody ought to write it up.'*

*Well it's done both those things. The document is what I would call an essay rather than a thesis. As one reviewer has commented, it does not argue an identifiable theological position but rather explores issues and exposes the practical consequences that will emerge if the characteristic ministry of priests in secular employment were acknowledged and taken seriously.*

*My aim now will be to use the thesis as a tool for encouraging the work of others.*

**Brenda Bonnett**



**Brenda** is a lifelong Christchurch resident. Her early years were spent in the Salvation Army where her family have been active and committed soldiers for several generations.

In her twenties Brenda moved to the Anglican Church and became a parishioner at the Holy Trinity (Avonside) parish. Here she was baptised and confirmed.

Within the parish Brenda has been involved as a leader in the Association of Anglican Women, chairperson of the worship committee, a reader, intercessor, server, sacristan and fair convener. Over this time Brenda also undertook her studies for the L.Th in order to learn more about the Church.

Whilst participating in a year-long “Disciples” programme Brenda experienced the first of several calls to priestly ordination. She undertook the Local Ordination Training programme and in 2004 was ordained to the Diaconate.

Her year as a Deacon was spent as part of the Ministry Team in the Opawa and St Martins parishes in Christchurch. Brenda was ordained as a priest in 2005 and is presently Curate at St Mary’s in Merivale.

*Of her study for the L.Th Brenda states: Working towards a LTh has been a long journey for me but definitely a worthwhile one. I first began studying for interest, to learn more about the Anglican Church that I had become part of, and some church history in general.*

*When I was accepted for ordination, studies became more intense as I stepped up my rate of studying. Having the EIDTS option available made it possible for me to complete ordination requirements without having to move away from Christchurch, and has given me a good grounding in ministry and mission.*

*Taking LTh papers meant a regular study programme and a wall planner with assignment dates marked in red, but it was always a feeling of achievement to send one away and to begin to focus on the next topic. Taking a correspondence course can be quite lonely, so I always appreciated the papers that had a summer or winter school as part of their programme, in order to meet both tutors and other students.*

*Along the way I came into contact with some very enthusiastic and supportive tutors, Directors and - naturally - the Registrar, Sue Haley. Their hard work and willingness to be part of the whole EIDTS study programme has been very much appreciated.*

**Jennifer Groves**



**Jennifer** was born in Wellington. She and her family have been active in the Salvation Army throughout her life. When Jennifer was seven the family settled in Tawa in Wellington and Jennifer became closely involved in the local Salvation Army corps and attended many of the programmes for young people.

Following her secondary schooling Jennifer completed a secretarial course at the Wellington Polytechnic and commenced work as a shorthand typist.

In 1988 Jennifer entered the Salvation Army Officer Training College and was commissioned as an officer in 1990. Her ministry has involved various youth positions in Auckland and Dunedin and as minister of a local church in Wellington.

Jennifer spent several years as Mission Training Officer at the Booth College of Mission at Trentham.

She has recently returned from Portugal where she served for six and a half years as the Youth Training and Mission Officer. In 2005 she was involved in organising a Youth Congress in Prague that was attended by 800 young people from around Europe.

In January this year Jennifer took up the position of Senior Training Officer – Mission at the Booth College of Mission.

Jennifer commenced her study with EIDTS in 1988 and completed her last 3 years of study by e-mail from Portugal.

*Of her studies with EIDTS Jennifer says: When I commenced study with EIDTS in 1998, it was due to necessity rather than a desire to do so. My ministry as a tutor at The Salvation Army Training College meant that I was required to have a theological qualification. I decided to try distance learning with EIDTS, a decision which proved to be a wise one indeed.*

*As I have wrestled with my learning and the thinking and challenges it has brought with it, my mind has been broadened and my spiritual walk enhanced. I salute the tutors who have been so diligent in their support and encouragement but also been incredibly patient when I have needed extra time to complete tasks. This became particularly important in the last three years of my study which was undertaken while on missionary service in Portugal.*

*To have reached the end after eight years of study is fantastic. It has inspired me greatly and I look forward to continuing study next year as I commence my BTheol through Otago University.*

**Janet McDonald**



**Janet** was born and grew up in Timaru where she was actively involved in the St Johns Anglican Church.

After completing her High School education she moved to work in the Mount Cook region before embarking on her overseas travel experience. Janet lived in Canada, the Isle of Man, France, Italy and the United Kingdom.

Kidney failure forced Janet to return home where she cared for her ageing mother and underwent dialysis in preparation for a kidney transplant. At this time Janet took work with the Timaru Information Centre where she still works as a part-time information consultant.

Janet also returned to the St Johns parish where she has served on the vestry, is the parish Synod representative and the Child Safety Protection Officer.

While on dialysis Janet also commenced her study with EIDTS. Over the past 11 years she has worked on one or two papers a year whilst also undergoing a kidney transplant and treatment for cancer.

Janet has found the study a challenge and has often had to work into the small (and not so small) hours of the night.

Completing her L.Th has been an achievement for Janet in the midst of her own family and personal circumstances. The flexibility of the EIDTS programme and the willingness of her Tutors to accommodate her circumstances has made this possible.

*Of her study for the L.Th Janet states:*

*"God, you must be joking", it is 10.30 pm, I am sitting in bed with my PJ's on, and you want me to get out, get dressed and walk down to the corner and post a cheque. "Get real" But post that cheque I did, and when someone asked me why I was 'doing theology', I could not give them a good answer. "Watch this space" was all I could reply.*

*The journey that the Licentiate of Theology took me on was like none other that I have ever done. I proved to myself that I had the brains and the strength to complete the course, even if I doubted that from time to time.*

*During the twelve years, I travelled the road of kidney failure, dialysis, transplantation, 10 years of caring for and the death of an elderly parent, depression, cancer, chemotherapy and radiation.*

*I did one or two papers a year, sometimes adding one in the holiday period, while still continuing with part time work. Don't anyone ever tell me they can't do something. If you want to you can. I with the help of God am proof of that.*

*In the "watch this space" I can now fill in, "accepted for ordination training for the Diaconate". In the meantime I might just enjoy reading a book for pleasure.*

**Ruth Smart**



**Ruth** was born in Otorohanga in the King Country and grew up on her parents farm at Paewhenua. She attended church services in the Paewhenua Hall and evensong services at the St Bride's church in Otorohanga.

In her early twenties Ruth went to Israel. This was a spur of the moment decision but that trip made a profound impact on her and brought the places in the Bible to life.

In 1996 Ruth married Daryl and together they attend the Cathedral Church of St Peter in Hamilton. There Ruth has taken on many of the roles of a lay member. She has been a member of the prayer ministry team and she and Daryl are involved with the Youth Group.

In 1999 Ruth participated in a year-long "Disciple" course and later was encouraged to enrol with EIDTS. After initially struggling to get back into study Ruth in her own words soon became "addicted".

Ruth works as an administrator with Fire Security Services and commits her evenings and weekends to her study. The structure of EIDTS has allowed Ruth to fit her study in with her work and home and parish activities.

Whilst Ruth now intends to continue on with the intention of completing an L.Th she received an Associate Diploma in Biblical Studies at this year's graduation

*Of her study with EIDTS Ruth says:*

*A fellow parishioner and priest had put some EIDTS brochures in the foyer of our church. I picked one up and it looked interesting. It was the right time for me to do some deeper reading and thinking about the contents of the Bible and the church itself.*

*Encouragement from our then Dean got me started on my first paper. Since then study has spiralled. Support from clergy, family and fellow parishioners and the amazing team at EIDTS has helped me to "stick at" my studies. The best thing has been that I have been able to work at my own pace. This means that if I am working short hours at work I can get some extra study done. However if work is demanding long hours I can then adjust the study accordingly.*

*The format of the material also allows for portability. I think it was the Pentateuch that travelled around England with us a number of years ago. It was a great way to fill in time waiting at the airports.*

*Thank you to the team at EIDTS for helping me complete the Associate Diploma, and for your support as I continue with the LTh.*



**Jim McKenna**



**Jim** was born in Belfast in Northern Ireland. He was brought up within a fundamentalist religious sect from which at the age of 18 he ran away to join the medical Corps of the British Army.

In the Army Jim trained in both general and psychiatric nursing. He served in the Middle East Land Forces, the Far East Land Forces and in the Mediterranean. In 1967 Jim transferred to the New Zealand Army Medical Corps and took up a position as Field Medical Instructor.

On discharge from the Army Jim worked for the New Zealand Railways for 12 years.

In 1997 Jim was ordained within the Anglican Church. He currently serves as Deacon of the St Luke's Parish in Christchurch and as Co-ordinating Chaplain at the Bishopspark Retirement Complex. He is also the New Zealand Co-ordinator of the Friends of the Little Brothers of Francis and a Board member of the St Luke's Community Trust – a group that was formed following a door to door survey of community needs in inner city Christchurch in 1999. This survey was published in 2000 in the document "A Church With Eyes and Ears".

In 2006 Jim completed the requirements for the award of the Associate in Christian Ministry. This qualification is based on the submission of a portfolio of a number of training events and activities. It was formerly administered by the New Zealand Association of

Theological Schools but now comes under the oversight of EIDTS.

*Of his study for the ACM Jim says:*

*On my arrival in New Zealand in September 1967, I attended a local Anglican parish. All went well for a number of years until the break-up of my marriage. No-one in the church community ever questioned why I was no longer accompanied by my family on a Sunday. No-one seemed to notice that for two years I did not approach the Lord's Table. And I was too proud to ask for help.*

*I wondered how many other people experienced the "Un-noticing of the Community of Faith". The feeling that no-one cared. The effects of living on the margins. This became my motivation for offering myself for community ministry training.*

*To equip myself for this ministry, I studied and completed courses in theology and community work, and for seven years worked under the supervision of the Rev Rodney Routledge in research of parish community needs and the resulting facilitating of community projects. However there was still something missing.*

*I began to ask where God was in my work. It was at this point that the study for ACM was recommended to me. It was a new way of studying and learning for me. This study has enabled me to integrate theology and community caring.*

## NEW RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL 2007

Those students who have attended residential schools as part of their EIDTS courses have generally reported that these have been of great assistance both in terms of face-to-face learning terms of feeling a sense of relationship with the tutor and with other students. Students have also stated that it gave them a sense of belonging to EIDTS and took away some of the feeling of isolation.

We have therefore considered the value of having a residential school that students could attend when making their first contact with EIDTS and when beginning their study.

In 2007 we will offer a residential school in Biblical Studies. This will be open to students enrolling for HS101 "Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures" and NT101 "Introduction to New Testament".

The school will be held at the Stella Maris Conference Centre, 11 Fettes Street, Seatoun, Wellington from 10.00am on Thursday 18 January until 2.00pm on Saturday 20 January.

This school will not be a requirement for students enrolling for these subjects but we believe that it will give students a "flying start" in these subjects and in their distance studies. We particularly recommend this to students who have been away from study for some time or who do not feel overly confident about their own academic abilities.

The number of participants will be limited so it will be "first in first served".

The cost of these schools is covered by EIDTS (through a grant from the St John's College Trust) and students are only required to meet the cost of transportation to and from the venue.

## INCREASE IN FEES

As indicated in the Director's message the Academic Committee have agreed that the Fees for 2007 will be increased to \$350.00 per subject. This decision was made with some reluctance as EIDTS clearly states in its Charter that we will seek to deliver our courses in an accessible and affordable manner.

That remains our intention. However it is now nearly 10 years since the fees were set at \$300.00 and over that time costs of printing, postage, and administration have risen considerably.

We trust that this rise will help to offset those costs and still allow us to meet our objectives of making our courses accessible to students in all parts of New Zealand and at an affordable cost.

## STAFF NEWS



We congratulate Terry Wall on the conferment of his doctorate at the University of Melbourne in March this year. Terry graduated DMinStuds from the Melbourne College of Divinity. His dissertation was entitled "Managing Conflict in Methodism" and explored the dispute over the ordination of gay and lesbian persons in the Methodist Church of New Zealand in the 1990s. Terry's thesis can be consulted at the Kinder library and at the Carey Baptist College library.



We also congratulate Raeburn Lange on the publishing of a further book. The book "Island Ministers: Indigenous Leadership in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Pacific Islands Christianity" was published by Pandanus Press in Canberra.

We were sorry to hear that Harry Swadling had had to undergo surgery earlier this year and has been having further treatment. Despite these setbacks Harry has continued his work as Tutor for NT 202 Gospel of Luke. We wish Harry well in his recovery.

## EVALUATIONS

Each year we ask our students to complete two evaluations of their course and its delivery. We do this at the end of the year and at mid-year. We are grateful to those who do complete these evaluations. The purpose of the evaluations is to help us to know what we need to do to keep up the standard of our material and our support to students.

With distance learning it is often difficult to know how students are finding their courses and if anything needs attending to. We take these evaluations seriously and base our review of courses and delivery very much upon the information that students give to us.

In addition (as a by-product) it helps with our NZQA requirements if we can show that we are responsive to our students needs.

We hope therefore that you will take the time to fill in these evaluation forms. Even if you have no strong feelings and are completely satisfied with your courses and their delivery we appreciate your returns. It helps us to know how things are going "out there".