



Foundations | Tūāpapa

"No one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ"

Part One: Vision and Strategy | Bishop Philip

This first webinar was split into two parts. The first reflected on the diocesan values while the second turned to rural matters. Later in the series (week three) we will consider urban matters.

It is an especially busy time of year for farmers, therefore we have tried to be as flexible as possible. Because there is no perfect meeting time, all webinars are recorded and can be watched by anyone as individuals or in groups, at any time. We appreciate that many are still recovering from the effects of the lockdown, therefore we have opted for four 90-minute webinars, rather than a three-day conference (which would not only be difficult to plan for in the context of Covid-19, but severely limits attendance, and asks for a significantly greater time investment from stretched leaders). We trust this series will benefit our ministry units and welcome any feedback.

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The Chat Box

The following transcript features comments that were posted to "all attendees". Some comments were sent exclusively to the panellists and were not recorded by the technology for that reason. The comments have been nominally grouped. Each new paragraph represents a new speaker.

To appreciate these comments in context we recommend that you watch the video.

Reflections on Rural Conversations and Context

Acknowledging and Responding to Stress and Anxiety

One farmer is setting up a retreat area down by a river with native bush, buying some large & small tents, sorting a spa for cold nights using wood, getting a kitchen space so local people can have time out, share space, listen to God in nature. Hopefully all ready by next summer or on the way! So useable even if rustic.

All the farmers are out in all weathers looking after the land and livestock with sometimes no support.... we need to be aware of mental health and stress.

Rural life may not be for all urbanites but it does allow space to be in touch with basics that so often we take for granted.

Chaplaincy: Listening and Presence

I enjoyed ministering at Tirau a couple of times in past years and am grateful for the opportunities for listening and sharing their narratives.

Chaplaincy has at its core - no matter the context - a turning up and listening to people in their own environment - I wonder whether it's time to resource rural chaplaincy?

We have been thinking that same thought.

Interesting, one Diocese is looking to appoint such a Chaplain

I like the idea of rural chaplaincy - listening to people in their own environment.

I went one Sunday morning to Taumarunui to preach at the service. Got there in the nick of time and shared my experience about the King, on Christ the King Sunday. Although, it had been two to three years ago. I can still recall the experience and opportunity given.

There's something about chaplains' commitment to being there that builds relationships and opens the pathways to spiritual conversations ...

Just thinking that we need to be on the ground in the rural district to really know what is going on. being an hour away is challenging

Yes, in the Manawatu floods I did a lot of visiting to farmers in stress. A wonderful way to support & hear the pain, the narratives, the way forward - so agree totally with Margaret Jack.

Mmm...as the composition of our communities continue to change...I think maybe some continued efforts to draw those various communities in under the "tent" of the church, and maybe more guidance on how this can be done or engaged with either on a community level or ecumenical level... to become as a home away from home...a shelter in a storm where Jesus is the focus...I attended Taupiri parish over the weekend with my family...we, Taupiri, are a small rural community.... (With McD and BP)---service was Jesus-focussed and hospitality overwhelming-what an experience - I listened to some stories and was likewise asked to share one...reminds me of the days before TV, when we all had to sit and listen to the "wireless" while Ouma and Oupa tuned it.

Values

A 90-year-old person from the rural community phoned me last night and said, what matters to rural people is continuity, our strategy needs to be to maintain a presence into the future.

Thanks to all those who made contributions to the chat on Tuesday evening. Apologies to those whose comments only went to the Panellists and were therefore not recorded.

Initial Needs Identified and Recommendations

- Authentic rural ministry requires listening to, and living alongside rural people;
- A formal rural chaplaincy appointment should be considered;
- Key values: sensitivity to farming seasons, consistency, and dependability of church during difficult times.