

National Synergy Local Identity



Theological Framework



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KWT/NZCPT

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Forward

To teach is to offer oneself to one's students as worthy of imitation.

Someone made an offering of those words a long time ago.¹ I have never forgotten them; never ceased to be challenged, indeed troubled by them. They speak directly to the vision and task, and the wonder and work of formational learning and the craft of teaching.

As you read and digest the documents *Our Faith, Theological Framework*, and *Special Character Guidelines*, written by the Kingsway Trust, you come face to face with the fruit of such vision and task, wonder and work. These documents are not mere theory, ungrounded ideals, or statements to read and set aside. They are working documents brimming over with passion and the invitation to both courageous participation and life-shaping practices. They are responsive to and inspired by God's love, heartened by faith in and the faithfulness of Jesus, and motivated by confident hope that God is renewing all things as his reign extends throughout the whole world he loves so much.

In the *Theological Framework* (p. 29) we read the following story:

A 12th century Bishop is walking through the emerging structure of a church being built in his diocese. As he wanders through the construction site, he asks a stonemason what he is doing and the stonemason replies, 'I'm cutting some blocks.' He walks further and asks the next stonemason what he is doing, 'I'm building a wall.' The Bishop moves on and inquires again. The response, 'I'm raising a cathedral to the glory of God.'" It's about seeing the bigger picture, the consequences of our actions, and the way our work can contribute toward restoration, shalom, and renewal.

All of us, living in uncertain times, too often shaped by images of disconnected learners expecting quick solutions and knowledge mastery by skimming the internet, need to know stories such as this; stories that impel us into the vast story told in God's Scriptures with its promises of purpose and hope for human life and all creation.

The 2018 McCrindle education report asserts that, in the early decades of the 21st century, we are in the midst of a far-reaching educational revolution.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is 'characterized by a fusion of technologies that blur the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres'. The Fourth Revolution supersedes the Third Revolution, which saw automated production through the use of electronics and information technology. The need for continuous learning lies at the heart of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.²

¹ I recently came across these words again in Patrick Brown's small book entitled *The Integration of Christian & Secular Education* (2018, p. 11). They are not original to him, however he cites them along with the memorable words of Augustine who is believed to have asserted the following: "If a person was a teacher then he or she was not evil; and if he or she was evil, then that person was not a teacher."

² M. McCrindle, *The Future of Education: the education trends shaping Australia's future*. (Norwest, NSW, Australia: 2018), 21.

These are urgent times. Our schools working in partnership with parents and families, must continue to be communities of wise, formational learning grounded in and shaped by the authoritative and wondrous biblical account of Jesus and God's kingdom; the true story of the world; the real story by which to live.

May we expectantly read and willingly participate in the challenges the *Our Faith, Theological Framework*, and *Special Character Guidelines* documents present. And to God be the glory in our generation and generations to come.

— Dr. Rod Thompson

Introduction

NZCPT schools are Christian communities of learning. They were founded to work in partnership with Christian parents to fulfil their responsibility for the education of their children/tamariki. NZCPT schools provide a Christ-centred learning environment where all aspects of school life, learning, and relationships are informed by Scripture and shaped by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Three documents express the vision of NZCPT and guide the schools in the delivery of their Special Character: "Our Faith," the "Theological Framework," and the "Special Character Guidelines." The core beliefs, values, and commitments held in common by NZCPT and its schools are outlined in the document "Our Faith."³ The "Theological Framework" expands upon these and discusses their implications for Christian education. Finally, the beliefs, values, and commitments of the "Theological Framework" are expressed through the seven core practices of the "Special Character Guidelines." They are: Prayer and other spiritual practices; Valuing and respecting others; Christ-like character formation; Engaging with the Scriptures; Thinking theologically; Delivering a Christ-centred curriculum; and Mission, Vocation and Service.

So what is a theological framework? A theological framework outlines the core beliefs and values of a Christian organisation and underpins the work they do. This theological framework reflects the non-denominational character and evangelical heritage of NZCPT and its schools,⁴ and is written to guide the schools in the delivery of their special character. It is not a comprehensive, systematic theology. Rather, it is grounded in the grand narrative of Scripture and draws on key theological concepts pertinent to Christian education and explores the implications of these. It answers such questions as "Who is God?" "What is Scripture?" "What does it mean to be human?" and "How might the gospel sustain, shape, and guide the life of a person and the work of a school?" It explores how Christian education can be an expression of gospel hope to the world and a participation in God's work of restoration and renewal.

With that in mind, let us begin with a brief overview of the grand narrative of Scripture, "The Real Story by which we Live."

³ Our core beliefs are summarised in our Statement of Faith, Narrative of Faith, and Prayer of Faith. We also hold to the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed, the first two historic creeds of the Christian faith.

⁴ For a fuller description of the term "evangelical" see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

The Real Story by which we Live

Lesslie Newbigin wrote, "The way we understand human life depends on what conception we have of the human story. What is the real story of which my life is a part?"⁵ The following story is a summation of the grand narrative of Scripture. It is the story by which we live.⁶

The one true God, who exists eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a holy trinity of self-giving love. God determined to share his love and life with human beings. Therefore, God created the heavens and the earth, with its spinning galaxies, mountains and rivers, teeming oceans and abundant wildlife. Then God created human beings in his image and likeness, male and female. He created them for relationship with himself and with one another. God blessed them to be fruitful and gave them a mandate to fill the earth, rule over it, steward God's creation and care for its creatures. God looked upon all he made and declared it very good. God continues to uphold the world and to sustain all he has created.

Our relationship with God, with others, and with creation, was fractured when sin, evil, and death entered the world.⁷ Yet God did not abandon his world or his image bearers. God had a plan which began with the call of Abraham to bless the world, firstly through his descendants—the people of Israel. God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, established a covenant with them through Moses at Mount Sinai, and led them into a good land. God gave the law to guide them, summed up in the Ten Commandments,⁸ and the two great commandments: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength," and "Love your neighbour as yourself."⁹ But God's people did not remain faithful to the covenant. When disaster struck, they cried out for help, and God raised up deliverers to rescue them from their enemies. Then they lived in peace for a while until once again they neglected their covenant obligations. This pattern repeated itself over and over, until Israel began to look less like the people of God and more like the nations around them. Eventually they asked God to give them a king so they could be like other nations. This request was a rejection of God as their true king. Nonetheless, God raised up David to be their leader. God's Spirit was with him, and he united the Israelites and saved them from their enemies. Although David wanted to build a house (temple) for God, God promised instead to establish David's house (dynasty) and commissioned his son Solomon to build the temple. For a while Israel lived in peace and saw the fulfilment of some of the promises of God to Abraham. But their time of peace was short lived. Solomon began to worship other gods, and after his death his kingdom was torn in two.

⁵ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 15.

⁶ This overview of the biblical narrative can also be found in the document, "Our Faith."

⁷ Here we are alluding to the events recorded in Genesis 3. This statement is not saying there was no death in the natural world prior to human sin (such as no autumn leaves falling or no cells dying). Rather, it is saying that when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command, they opened the way for the powers of sin, evil, and death to enter the world. From that time on, they no longer had access to the tree of life and the possibility of living forever (Gen. 2:17; 3:22-24). Their sin also had consequences for creation (Gen. 3:17-18; Rom. 8:19-22). The hope of everlasting life was restored to humanity when Jesus destroyed the powers of sin, evil, and death through his death and resurrection (Rom. 5:12-17; 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:20-26).

⁸ Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21.

⁹ Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18. See also Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31.

In the years that followed, God's people became more and more unfaithful. God sent prophets to call them back to him. The prophets warned them of approaching danger, but they did not listen. Eventually the land was invaded, the temple destroyed, and the people taken into exile. Yet God did not abandon his people or his plan to save the world. God promised to rescue them and send the Messiah.¹⁰ He would be their king par excellence, and through him all the nations of the world would be blessed. For he would make atonement for their sins, and the sins of the whole world.

These hopes were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. God the Son, through whom all things were created, became God incarnate,¹¹ fully God and fully human. Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, revealing to the world what God is truly like. Jesus lived a holy, loving, and sinless life, modelling for humanity what it means to be human. Through his ministry, Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God. He was rejected by the ruling authorities, was crucified, died, and buried. On the third day he rose from the dead. Through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God defeated the powers of sin, Satan, and death, ushered in a new covenant, and provided for our forgiveness and salvation. The bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead marks the beginning of the new creation. Jesus ascended into heaven where he now reigns at the right hand of the Father.

The Holy Spirit, who is the giver of life and who was active in the ministry of Jesus, came upon the early church at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is at work in the world bringing people to faith, drawing them to God, guiding them into truth, and bringing about the work of regeneration and transformation in their lives so that those in Christ will be conformed to Christ's image.¹² The redeemed in Christ are united by the Holy Spirit and belong to one, holy, universal church. Guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the church is called to participate with Christ in God's mission to bring reconciliation, restoration, and renewal to a hurting and broken world until Christ returns in glory to usher in the new creation in all its fullness. At that time, the dead will be resurrected, God will bring about his final justice and reconciliation, all evil will be eradicated, and the heavens and earth will be made new.¹³

This overarching narrative is not the only story of human history, but it is a true story of human history, and it informs the work of NZCPT and its network of schools.

¹⁰ "Messiah" (Greek: *Christos*) means "anointed one." For a full description see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

¹¹ God incarnate means "God in the flesh."

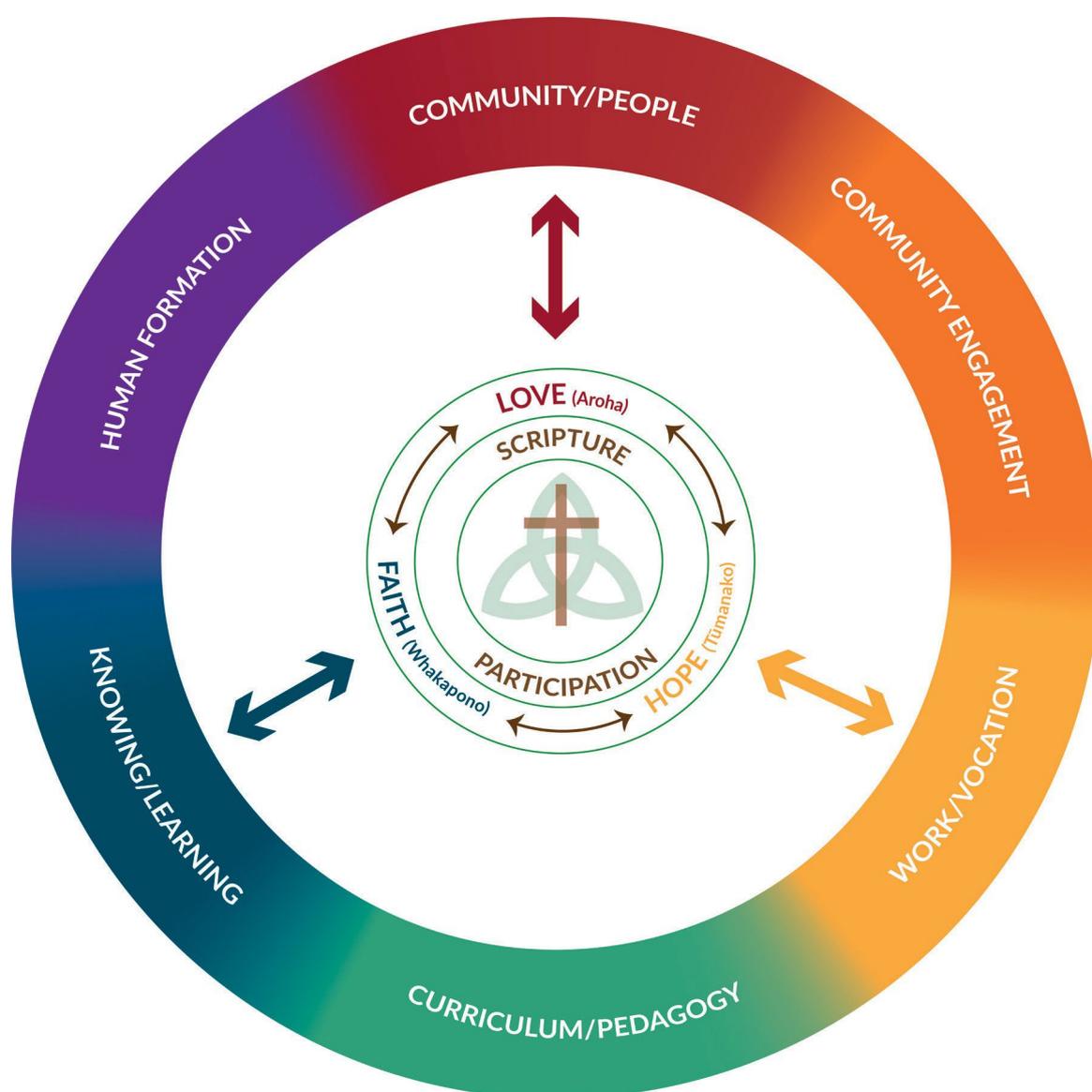
¹² Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Col. 3:10.

¹³ Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 2:6-11, 16; 8:18-21; 1 Cor. 15:22-26; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 1:9-10; 3:4; Phil. 3:20; Rev. 11:15; 21:1-22:7.

Theological Framework Diagram

The diagram below illustrates the core beliefs and ideas represented in this theological framework and shows how they relate to and inform Christian education.

At the centre of the diagram we have our core beliefs about God and the implications of this for Christian education. Encircling this we have Scripture, God's written word to us, and our participation in Christ (*participatio Christi*).¹⁴ The third ring represents the lenses of faith, hope and love, which are grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ and inform all segments of the outer ring. The arrows connecting faith, hope, and love to the outer ring indicate a two-way relationship between our theology and our educational context.



¹⁴ The term *participatio Christi* is discussed below under the section, "Our Participation in Christ."

The Trinity



Scripture reveals that God is holy, God is love, and God is triune: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Te Matua, te Tamaiti, ā te Wairua Tapu).¹⁵ Therefore, a symbol representing the trinity is placed at the centre of our diagram. God, who is the source of all that exists, is a relational being. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit co-exist in perfect union, mutual submission, generosity, harmony, trust, and love. Thus, the trinity models for human beings what it means to relate in community.¹⁶

What it means that God created the heavens and earth

It is this triune, holy, and loving God who spoke all things into being and who fills the universe with life, meaning, and purpose. All creation in its vast, rich, colourful diversity finds its origin in God. Therefore, all our learning, teaching, and working deals in some way with God's world, and all that is true is God's truth, no matter where it is found.¹⁷ We affirm God's wisdom in creation, providence, and redemption, and acknowledge that God is the source of all wisdom.¹⁸ God created human beings in his image. He made us for relationship with himself and with one another. Therefore, we are not alone in the universe. We are loved and valued by God.

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The Cross



The cross at the centre of our diagram reminds us of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who was with God in the beginning and through whom all things were made.¹⁹

What it means that Jesus is fully God and fully human

Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh,²⁰ fully God and fully human. He is the true image of the invisible God,²¹ for in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.²² Thus, Christ has revealed to us what God is truly like. The Father has made himself known through his Son. As the image of God made fully human, Jesus models what it means to be human. He is also our source of wisdom.²³ Therefore, we who teach and govern pay close attention to Jesus Christ, particularly as revealed in the Gospels. We take seriously Jesus' words that to lead and teach is to serve.²⁴

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¹⁵ Matt. 28:19; John 14:16-20; Acts 2:32-33; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20-21.

¹⁶ Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 76.

¹⁷ This statement goes back to St. Augustine (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II.2.15). Augustine wanted his Christian readers to understand that God is the source of all truth, and that when a person discovers something to be true, no matter where it is found, it should not be rejected. It belongs to the Master (*On Christian Doctrine*, II.18). This does not mean that all claims to truth are true.

¹⁸ Prov. 3:13-24; Prov. 8; Job 38-41 (particularly 38:36-37 and 39:26); Ps. 19 (particularly 19:7); 1 Kings 3:5-28; 4:29-34; 1 Cor. 1:18-2:16; Eph. 1:8-10; Col. 2:2-3; James 1:5; 3:17¹⁹ Mark 1:1; John 1:1-3, 14, 18; Col. 1:15-16; Heb. 1:1-2.

²⁰ John 1:14. See also Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35; Col. 2:9.

²¹ Col. 1:15, 19.

²² Col. 1:19. See also Col. 2:9; John 14:8-9; Phil. 2:6-7; Heb. 1:3.

²³ In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:2-3). See also 1 Cor. 1:24, 30.

²⁴ Mark 10:42-45; John 13:13-17.

Through Jesus, God has shared in our humanity. Jesus demonstrated that our physicality matters: our working, praying, learning, and celebrating matters. Jesus knows what it is to be human. Therefore, Christian educators/kaiako are attentive to the physical needs of their students/ākonga. They are also attuned to their environment and endeavour to create spaces that inspire curiosity, wonder, and a desire to learn.

Jesus came to a particular people, time, and place. In this he demonstrated that cultures, geography, and history matter.²⁵ Therefore, we value the cultural heritage of our students, explore what it means to be citizens of Aotearoa/New Zealand, introduce students to Te Reo Māori and the culture of the Māori people, and celebrate our Christian heritage.

Jesus brought good news to the poor, healing to the sick, food to the hungry, and freedom to the oppressed.²⁶ He demonstrated that God is for human beings, not against them. He also called disciples to join him in his mission. Therefore, Christian education is intentionally connected with the mission of God (*missio Dei*) as revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ.²⁷ It is an expression of gospel hope for the world.

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What it means that Jesus suffered and died

The cross is also a reminder that God loved the world so much, he refused to let us die in our sins.²⁸ God's love is cruciformed i.e. it's a cross-shaped, sacrificial, self-giving love.²⁹ It's a love that is willing to die for the sake of another. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God made atonement for sins, destroyed the works of the evil one, and reconciled to himself all things.³⁰ Through Christ, God has shared in our suffering. Christ understands our struggles and weakness, and intercedes for us, and he can comfort us in our sorrows and pain.³¹

There is no area of life or learning that is separate from Christ. This is the heart of Christ-centred education.

What it means that Jesus rose from the dead

The resurrection of Jesus gives us grounds for hope. He is the first fruits of those who will be raised to eternal life.³² After his ascension, Jesus was enthroned at the right hand of the Father. Thus, Jesus is Lord (Te Ariki) over all things.³³ Therefore, there is no area of life or learning that is separate from Christ. This is the heart of Christ-centred education. "Jesus is Lord of every facet of life, Lord of every nook and cranny of the school yard."³⁴

²⁵ See also Acts 17:26-28; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11.

²⁶ Matt. 4:23-25; Mark 1:14-15, 39; Acts 2:22.

²⁷ For a full description of the term "mission" see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

²⁸ John 3:16-17; Rom. 5:8; 8:38-39; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 John 4:7-11.

²⁹ John 15:13; Rom. 5:7-8; Phil. 2:6-8.

³⁰ Matt. 26:27-28; John 14:6; Rom. 5:6-11, 18; 1 Cor. 15:18; 2 Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:17-20; 2:13-15; Eph. 1:7-10; Heb. 2:14-17; 5:7-10; 9:11-15; 1 John 2:1-2; 3:8; 4:10; Rev. 5:9.

³¹ Rom. 8:34; Heb. 3:14-16.

³² 1 Cor. 15:20-23. See also Rom. 6:3-4 and 1 John 5:11-13.

³³ Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:33, 36; 7:56; Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 1:3, 16-20; 2:10; 3:1; Heb. 1:1-3.

³⁴ Harry Burggraaf, ed., *Transformational Education: A Framework for Christian Teachers* (Mount Evelyn Christian School, 2014), 12.

Holy Scripture

Christian education is grounded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Scriptures tell the story of God and his people throughout history. They reveal who God is, who we are, what went wrong, and what God is doing to put things right.³⁵ They tell the unfolding story of redemption that culminates in Jesus Christ. They provide us with an understanding of the world and our place in it. They tell us where history is going and how we can be a part of it. Therefore, Christian educators seek to know the Scriptures well and teach them to their students.

The Scriptures are inspired by God

We believe the Holy Scriptures are uniquely inspired by God.³⁶ Through Scripture, God has revealed himself to humanity. We also believe that God, in his providence, has preserved the meaning and intent of the original autographs during the long process of transmission and translation. Therefore, we affirm that the Scriptures are trustworthy and authoritative, and will achieve the purposes for which God intended. The Scriptures were written to make us “wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ”³⁷ and trained “in righteousness, so that all God’s people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”³⁸ Through the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit continues to lead and guide the church today.

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The Scriptures were written by people

The Bible is also a collection of sixty-six books written by real people over a period of about a thousand years. It was written in different historical circumstances, in different geographical and cultural settings, in multiple genres, and in three different languages.³⁹ Therefore, we pay attention to its literary context,⁴⁰ its historical and cultural background,⁴¹ and how its genres communicate. This helps us interpret Scripture well. All reading involves interpretation. Paying attention to context can help us do this well. So, we affirm the divine and human dimensions of Scripture, for it is through human language, culture, history, and ultimately through Jesus Christ, that God has chosen to speak to us.

³⁵ Burggraaf, ed. *Transformational Education*, 51.

³⁶ 2 Tim. 3:16a; Heb. 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:20-21.

³⁷ 2 Tim. 3:15b.

³⁸ 2 Tim. 3:16b-17. A number of passages speak of the purposes of Scripture. Here are a few. The Scriptures attest to Christ (Luke 24:27; John 5:39; 1 Peter 1:10-11); judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12); guide us into truth (Acts 17:11); and are useful for teaching, rebuking, correction, and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16).

³⁹ Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

⁴⁰ That is, we endeavour to read a verse in the light of its surrounding passage, a passage in the light of its chapter, a chapter in the light of its book, and each book in the light of the overarching narrative of Scripture.

⁴¹ The Bible shows the importance of this by alerting us to the historical setting of events. Take for example Luke’s introduction to the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-7a) and Isaiah’s introduction to his message in Isaiah 1:1.

One overarching narrative that attests to Christ

While Scripture is diverse, it coheres into one overarching narrative that tells a single story from Genesis to Revelation. It is this grand narrative that provides the interpretive sense of the individual books. We can sum up this grand narrative as a four-part scheme: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Renewal;⁴² or as a six-act scheme: Creation (God Establishes his Kingdom); Fall (Rebellion in the Kingdom); Israel (The King chooses Israel); Redemption/Christ (The Coming of the King); Church (Spreading the news of the King); and Consummation (The Return of the King).⁴³ These schemes help us see how the grand narrative of Scripture holds together. The Old Testament anticipates Christ, shows the need for Christ, and attests to Christ.⁴⁴ The Gospels reveal Christ,⁴⁵ and the rest of the New Testament testifies to Christ and shows what it means to follow him until he returns.

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The overarching narrative of Scripture reminds us that God revealed himself to people over time.⁴⁶ It also reminds us of where we fit in the overall drama. We are not ancient Israel. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, living between the time of Christ's ascension and his return in glory. This has implications for how we read and apply Scripture. "When we read scripture as Christians, we read it precisely as people of the new covenant and of the new creation. We do not read it... as a flat, uniform list of regulations or doctrines. We read it as the narrative in which we ourselves are now called to take part. We read it to discover 'the story so far', and also 'how it's supposed to end'. To put it another way, we live between the end of Acts and the closing scene of Revelation. If we want to understand Scripture and find it doing its proper work in and through us, we must learn to read and understand it in the light of that overall story."⁴⁷

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⁴² Dr Ken Dickens, et al., *Transformation by Design: The Big Picture. A Curriculum Development Resource for Christian Schools* (Penrith, NSW: National Institute for Christian Education, 2017), 44-46.

⁴³ Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 7.

⁴⁴ John 5:39-40; Luke 24:25-27. For more on the Old Testament, see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

⁴⁵ When we speak of "the Gospels" (plural, with a capital G), we mean the four canonical accounts of Jesus' life, death and resurrection written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. See Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

⁴⁶ In other words, God's revelation in Scripture is progressive. For example, Abraham did not know the law of Moses. The law was given to the Israelites after they were delivered from Egypt. Later, Jesus reinterpreted these laws. See, for example, how Jesus dealt with the law of retaliation in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:38-39). Jesus also said that some laws were given as a concession because people's hearts were hard (Mark 10:2-9). Elsewhere Jesus claimed that the greatest commandment is love (Matt. 22:37-40). Later, Paul did not require the Gentiles to be circumcised or to keep Israel's food laws (Acts 15:1-21; Gal. 5:6). Paul realised that the Gentiles did not need to become Jewish in order to follow Israel's Messiah. These examples remind us to keep the progressive revelation of Scripture in mind when we interpret and apply Scripture today.

⁴⁷ Tom Wright, *Surprised by HOPE* (London: SPCK, 2007).

What this means for us

As Christian educators we seek to know the Scriptures well, become skilled in interpreting them wisely, and provide opportunities for students to engage with the Scriptures in ways they will find rewarding. We want students to encounter God through the Scriptures. We want them to know the grand story of Scripture and how they can become part of it. We want them to experience the love of the Father, be inspired to become authentic followers of Jesus Christ, and be motivated to live lives responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit as they grow in faith, hope, and love, and participate in God's mission for the world.

“When we read Scripture as Christians, we read it precisely as people of the new covenant and of the new creation... we read it to discover ‘the story so far’ and ‘how it’s supposed to end.’”

-- Tom Wright

Our Participation in Christ

Our understanding of God is mediated to us through Scripture, but our knowledge of God is not merely cognitive. At the point of our conversion, when we placed our faith in Jesus Christ, we were united with Christ through the Holy Spirit and brought into relationship with God the Father. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ,⁴⁸ we began to experience the love of God.⁴⁹ Similarly, while Scripture reveals to us the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our knowledge of Christ is not merely historical. Through the Holy Spirit we are joined to Christ and participate in the ongoing life of Christ, experiencing and sharing in his current reality as the Son of the Father.⁵⁰ It is by the Holy Spirit that we become children of God and are able to cry, "Abba, Father."⁵¹ It is by the Holy Spirit that we experience peace and joy, are inspired to worship and pray, and are enabled to live as authentic followers of Jesus Christ.⁵²

Christ's life is on our behalf, so that we may live in and through Christ.

Christ lived, and continues to live *on our behalf*. As Christians we understand that Jesus died on our behalf. But the concept of "participation" (*participatio Christi*) affirms that not only did Jesus die on our behalf, but that his entire incarnate existence, including the periods before his death and after his ascension are on our behalf. Even now Jesus Christ intercedes for us. Christ's life is on our behalf, so that we may live in and through Christ. The New Testament affirms this when it says that we live "in Christ" and have been united "with Christ."⁵³ Paul expresses this in his letter to the Galatians: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."⁵⁴

Our salvation through Christ, our participation in Christ, and our confession that Christ is Lord, provide the basis for Christ-centred education.⁵⁵ It motivates us to join with Christ in praying, "Your kingdom come," and it inspires us to participate with Christ in God's mission to bring restoration, renewal, and *shalom* to all creation. The concept of participation in Christ endues faith, hope, and love with Christological content, so that our faith is a sharing in Christ's faith, our love is a sharing in Christ's love, and our hope is a sharing in Christ's hope for the world.

⁴⁸ Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6.

⁴⁹ Rom. 5:5.

⁵⁰ John 14:15-20, 23; 17:20-26; Rom. 8:10-11; Eph. 1:3-14.

⁵¹ Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:26; 4:6.

⁵² John 14:26-27; 20:21-22; Rom. 14:17; Gal. 5:22.

⁵³ Col. 2:9-15; Eph. 1:3-14.

⁵⁴ Gal. 2:20.

⁵⁵ "Christ-centred education" may stand in tension with Ministry of Education language and expectations around teacher best practice and "child-centred education." The language of "participation" in Christ provides a basis for negotiating that tension and preserving NZCPT's commitment to Christo-centrism, should it ever become problematic.

Faith, Hope, and Love

People exhibit degrees of faith or trust in themselves, in others, and in the world. Many also have longings or hopes for the future, and things and people they love. But the gospel shapes our faith/whakapono, our hopes/tūmanako, and our loves/aroha in particular ways.

When Jesus began preaching in Galilee he announced the gospel/rongopai i.e. the “good news” that the kingdom of God was near (Mark 1:14).⁵⁶ By this Jesus meant that the power and presence of God was breaking in through his ministry—God was coming to save his people as he had promised. The evidence for this was that the blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame walked, and the poor heard the good news. For the New Testament authors writing after Jesus’ resurrection, the gospel was the good news that God had indeed come to save his people and all humankind, and he had done this through his Son Jesus Christ, who was crucified, but whom God vindicated by raising him from the dead and enthroning him as Lord over all creation.⁵⁷ In short, the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ. The gospel reveals the *faithfulness* of God and calls us to *faith* in Jesus Christ. The gospel reveals the *love* of God and inspires us to *love* others as Christ loved us. The gospel gives us a reason to *hope* because Christ has been raised from the dead, is Lord of all, and is guiding history toward new creation.

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The gospel and faith (te whakapono)

The word “faith” (Greek: *pistis*) can be understood in two ways. As a noun (n) it can refer to the content of our belief. As a verb (v) it can mean “trust,” “reliance,” “confidence.” Our faith/belief (n) is informed by the grand narrative of Scripture and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Through the gospel, God demonstrated his faithfulness (Greek: *pistos*) to the covenants and his commitment to see his purposes fulfilled for creation. The Father was faithful in sending his Son and in raising him from the dead.⁵⁸ The Son placed his trust in his Father and was faithful in carrying out his mission.⁵⁹ The Holy Spirit continues the work of the Son, drawing people to faith in Christ. We in turn place our faith/trust (v) in Christ and offer him our allegiance.⁶⁰ Therefore, we seek people of genuine faith (v) in Jesus Christ for positions of governance, management, and teaching in NZCPT schools, and people who aspire to be informed in their faith (n).

⁵⁶ The word “gospel” comes from the Greek *euangelion*, meaning “good news.” For a fuller description of the word “gospel” see Appendix B: “Meaning of Terms.”

⁵⁷ Mark 1:1; Rom. 1:1-4, 16-17.

⁵⁸ Acts 2:24-36; Heb. 10:23.

⁵⁹ Luke 22:42; John 14:31; 15:9-10; Rom. 3:22, Gal. 2:15.

⁶⁰ Faith is the quality that has marked out the people of God throughout history, but with the gospel this faith is now focused on “Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.” (Heb. 11:1–12:2a).

The gospel and hope (te tūmanako)

The Old Testament prophets worshipped God as creator and king over all the earth.⁶¹ But they also recognised there was rebellion in the kingdom. They longed for the end of the present evil age and looked forward to the dawn of a new age. They longed for the day when God would return and establish his kingdom. This would coincide with the arrival of the Messiah, and would include the forgiveness of sins, a new covenant, healing and miracles, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the destruction of God's enemies, the return of the exiles, the resurrection of the dead, and the restoration and renewal of creation.⁶² This was the hope of the Jewish people around the time of Jesus.

We live in this 'in between' time—when the kingdom has come in part but not yet in all its fullness... we live between the 'already' and 'not yet' of the kingdom of God.

Then God did something surprising. He broke into the middle of history. Jesus came proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. He performed healings and miracles as signs that God's kingdom was breaking in.⁶³ He forgave sins and instituted a new covenant in his blood. Through his death and resurrection, he defeated the powers of sin, death, and the devil. At his ascension, he was enthroned at the right hand of God the Father. Then the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit on the early church at Pentecost.⁶⁴

The Holy Spirit is still with us today, drawing people to faith, and bringing about forgiveness, healing and transformation in their lives. However, the kingdom of God has not yet come in all its fullness. For now, only Christ has been raised from the dead. The resurrection at the end of the age is still to come. For now, the Holy Spirit makes us alive in Christ, but there is still rebellion in the kingdom, and the whole creation groans waiting for release from its bondage to decay.⁶⁵ So we live in this 'in between' time—when the kingdom has come in part but not yet in all its fullness.⁶⁶

As we live between the 'already' and the 'not yet' of the kingdom of God, Jesus' resurrection gives us grounds for hope. It reminds us that one day we too will be raised from the dead and will share in the new creation.⁶⁷ We look forward in hope to the *shalom/rangimārie* of the future kingdom: "the absence of war; the ending of infirmity and disease; peace in humanity's relationship with God; the restoration of luxuriant fruitfulness in nature; even the end of violence in the animal kingdom."⁶⁸ This hope encourages us to continue to pray "Your kingdom come," and to seek first the kingdom of

⁶¹ See e.g. Isaiah 6:1-3; 40:21-22; 66:1-2. See also Psalms 47:1-9; 68:24-28; 93:1-2; 96:10; 103:19.

⁶² See e.g. Isa. 2:2-4; 9:4-7; 11:1-10; 40:3-5; 42:1-7; 61:1-3; 65:17-25; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24; 37:11-14; Daniel 7:13-14; Joel 2:28-29; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 3:8-9; 9:9-10. See also Psalms 2:1-12; 24:7-10; 89:20-37.

⁶³ Jesus said, "If it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matt. 12:28).

⁶⁴ This was a sign that the last days had begun (Acts 2:14-18; Heb. 1:2).

⁶⁵ Rom. 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 50-57; Rev. 21:1-5.

⁶⁶ Another way to look at it is that we are living at the intersection of two overlapping ages: this present evil age, which began with the fall and will end when Christ returns; and the age to come, which began with Christ's life, death and resurrection and will continue forevermore. So we experience the effects of living at the intersection of two ages. We experience sickness, suffering, and death, but we also experience the presence of the Holy Spirit breaking into the present with the life, healing, restoration, and peace of the age to come (John 14:27; Luke 24:36).

⁶⁷ 1 Cor. 15:21-28, 42-58; Rom 5:1-5; 8:18-25; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Phil. 3:20-21.

⁶⁸ Chris Marshall, *Kingdom Come: The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (Auckland, NZ: Impetus Publications, 1993), 27-28. The Hebrew word *shalom* is a broad term that includes peace, wellbeing, wholeness, security, and harmony. For a fuller description see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

God so that our work is a participation with Christ in God's mission of restoration and renewal.⁶⁹ This hope encourages us to orient our lives now according to that future reality—to live now as people of the new covenant and new creation, empowered by the presence of the Holy Spirit. This hope gives our work purpose and direction, for we know that nothing we do in Christ will be lost. This hope encourages us to embrace the future and to be open to new possibilities because we know that Christ is the Lord of history and is guiding history toward the new creation. This hope encourages us to believe that new life can spring from barrenness, healing from sickness, beauty from ashes, reconciliation from conflict, and resurrection from death.

The gospel and love (te aroha)

Our love is also shaped by the gospel. God is love.⁷⁰ The Father demonstrated his love for us by sending his only Son, Jesus Christ.⁷¹ We now experience the love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.⁷² Thus God calls us to love him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, to love our neighbour as ourselves, and even to love our enemies.⁷³ Jesus claimed that the whole law could be summed up in the command to love.⁷⁴ He also said people would know who are his disciples by their love for one another.⁷⁵ When we love, we image the triune God.

Paul described love as follows: "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."⁷⁶ For Paul, love is the fulfilment of the law.⁷⁷ Paul also understood that without love, our hope is in vain. And without love, we have no basis for trust.

And these three remain: faith, hope, and love

Paul wrote, "Now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."⁷⁸ Faith, hope, and love remain, because God is love, and the kingdom of God is characterised by faith, hope, and love.⁷⁹ Therefore, we want all that we think and all that we do to "flow from and reflect faith, hope, and love."⁸⁰ We are people of faith/whakapono because God, in Christ, has been faithful to us. We are people of hope/tūmanako because Christ has been raised from the dead.⁸¹ We are people of love/aroha because God has first loved us.⁸² Faith, hope, and love inform the ways we relate in community, work out our vocations, grow and develop, think and know, learn and teach, engage in society, and steward creation.

⁶⁹ Matt. 6:33. For a description of the mission of God, see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

⁷⁰ 1 John 4:7-12, 16.

⁷¹ John 3:16; 15:13; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10.

⁷² Rom. 5:5.

⁷³ Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18b; Micah 6:8; Matt. 5:43-48; 22:37-40; Luke 6:27-35; John 15:12-13; Rom. 5:5-8; 8:31-39; Eph. 3:16-19; 1 John 3:1; 4:7-19. Jesus describes what love of enemies is like in practice (Matt. 5:43-48; 22:37-40; Luke 6:27-36).

⁷⁴ Matt. 22:37-40.

⁷⁵ John 13:34-35; 15:12-13.

⁷⁶ 1 Cor. 13:4-8a.

⁷⁷ Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:13-14; Col. 3:14.

⁷⁸ 1 Cor. 13:13.

⁷⁹ The kingdom of God is also characterised by righteousness, peace, and joy (Rom. 14:17).

⁸⁰ Brian Harris, *The Big Picture: Building Blocks of a Christian World View* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2015), 18.

⁸¹ 1 Cor. 15:20.

⁸² Rom. 3:22; 5:8; 1 John 4:19.

Human Formation

Before we consider human formation, let us first consider what it means to be human.

What does it mean to be human? (Biblical anthropology)

According to Genesis, God created human beings in his image (*imago Dei*),⁸³ male and female.⁸⁴ This means that every human person, regardless of age, culture, physical features, social standing, or ability, is deeply loved and valued by God, and endowed with human dignity.⁸⁵ Therefore, as Christian educators we recognise the dignity and value of every person.

God blessed human beings and commissioned them to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and rule over it (Gen. 1:28). Therefore, as image bearers under God's sovereignty, we are called to a vocation that includes exploration, discovery, innovation, governing, designing, building, writing, and creating. We are called to develop the potential in God's good creation.⁸⁶

Genesis 1:28 is not a mandate to rule over one another. We are called to love one another and live in right relationship with one another. Therefore, those in positions of authority follow the example of Christ, who "did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage."⁸⁷ Christ taught his disciples to serve, "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve."⁸⁸

Genesis 1:28 is not a mandate to exploit or ravage the earth. It is a call to royal stewardship/*kaitiakitanga*—to be wise stewards/*kaitiaki* of the earth and its resources, caring for creation, and discovering and unfolding the potential in creation.⁸⁹ We are invited to enjoy God's creation, and we can express our gratitude to God for his abundant provision.

Scripture affirms that being human is a good thing. We are part of God's good creation and we are fearfully and wonderfully made.⁹⁰ However, Scripture also reveals that since the rebellion of the first couple (Gen. 3), human beings have become deeply flawed. We share in the sin of Adam and have

⁸³ Gen. 1:26-28; 9:6. The phrase "image of God" refers to the whole person, not just to one aspect of a person, such as his/her mind or conscience. It is also tied to our calling to rule over the earth as God's representatives.

⁸⁴ There are some things to consider in relation to men and women being created in God's image (Gen. 1:28). First, God's commission to humanity in Gen. 1:28 applies to both men and women. Second, God's creation of human beings in his image as male and female, does not exclude those who are born with biological traits of both sexes. Jesus' words about eunuchs who were born that way may be applicable here (Matt. 19:12). Third, being male or female is grounded in our biological sex. This is important to note in a culture that recognises increasing gender fluidity. Fourth, in keeping with the dignity and value of every person made in God's image, we seek to be understanding and compassionate with students who are questioning their gender and/or sexual orientation. Finally, we remember that in Christ we are destined to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18), and in Christ, we are one, regardless of whether we are male or female (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Therefore, we take care not to stereotype maleness and femaleness or to limit God's call on a person's life.

⁸⁵ See e.g. Psalm 8:4-8; 139:13-16; John 3:16-17; Rom. 5:8-9.

⁸⁶ Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning and Living*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 32; Bartholemew and Goheen, *Drama of Scripture*, 46.

⁸⁷ Phil. 2:6-8.

⁸⁸ Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45. See John 13:13-15.

⁸⁹ Gen. 1:26, 28; 2:5, 19-20.

⁹⁰ Gen. 1:31; Psalm 8:4-8; 139:13-16.

sinned just as Adam sinned.⁹¹ Sin distorts the way we image God. Yet we are still God's image bearers (Gen. 9:6). Moreover, Christ has shared in our humanity and provided for our salvation.⁹² Therefore, our schools provide clear boundaries, guidelines, and pastoral support to ensure the safety, growth, and development of all. They also provide an environment where students can respond to the gospel, turn towards God,⁹³ put their faith in Jesus Christ,⁹⁴ receive forgiveness of sins,⁹⁵ and experience the transforming and life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.

Human beings are growing beings. However, it is not enough to say (as "formation" alone may imply) that we change. Rather, when our change is guided by faith, hope, and love, it entails growth toward Christ-likeness, or true humanness.⁹⁶ Sin is that which hinders this growth or subverts the *telos* of our changing.⁹⁷ Faith, hope, and love can guide students' loves and hopes, and encourage their formation as people who desire the kingdom of God.⁹⁸

Faith and human formation

Teachers can encourage students to grow in faith by providing them with opportunities to explore the Scriptures in ways they will find rewarding. The grand narrative of Scripture will not only help students understand the story they are part of but will provide them with a vantage point from which to view and critique alternative stories in our culture. Our students are already being formed by the culture in which they live. Therefore, Christian education is to some degree an engagement in counter-cultural formation. We offer a biblical vision of the good life that stands in contrast to the idols in current culture, such as individualism, greed, consumerism, materialism, and hedonism.

Our students are already being formed by the culture in which they live. Therefore, Christian education is to some degree an engagement in counter-cultural formation.

⁹¹ Rom. 3:23; 5:6-8; 1 Cor. 15:21-22. The word "sin" most commonly translates the Hebrew *ḥattā't* (meaning "to miss a goal/mark) and the Greek *hamartia* (meaning "failure to live up to God's standard"). Fundamentally, sin is our failure to live up to who we are called to be as human beings created in God's image. Sin was also understood to be a power that had invaded the world and deceived humankind.

⁹² John 1:14; 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 8:31-39; 1 Cor. 15: 48-49; 2 Cor. 5:19; Heb. 2:14-17.

⁹³ The word "turn" is another way of saying "repent." It translates the Greek *metanoia* (meaning "a change of mind") and *epistrepḗ* (meaning "to turn toward something or someone.") *Metanoia* and *epistrepḗ* were used to translate the Hebrew word *šûb/yûb*, meaning "turning." For a fuller description see Appendix B: Meaning of Terms.

⁹⁴ Rom. 1:16-17; 10: 9-11; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9.

⁹⁵ Rom. 3:21-26; 6:23.

⁹⁶ Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 3:16-19; 1 John 5:13. You are probably aware of the phrase, "To err is human." However, it is important to distinguish sinfulness from humanness. Christ has not redeemed us so that we can set aside our humanity. Christ died to save humanity. The transforming work of the Holy Spirit enables us to become more like Christ, and thereby more fully human.

⁹⁷ The Greek word *telos*, which is used in the New Testament, refers to the ultimate end/goal/conclusion of a thing, or person, or era. Here it refers to the destiny of those in Christ i.e. to be conformed to Christ's image.

⁹⁸ James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation. Cultural Liturgies*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 34.

Love and human formation

Human beings are desiring beings who are deeply shaped by what they love. And as embodied creatures, their loves are shaped by material, embodied practices.⁹⁹ Therefore, our education must include not only knowledge, beliefs, and skills, but also practices that shape the loves of students.¹⁰⁰

Our education must include not only knowledge, beliefs, and skills, but also practices that shape the loves of students.

We seek to inspire in students a love for Jesus and his kingdom. We can encourage this through practices such as praying for one another and the world, celebrating Christian festivals, hearing or watching inspirational stories, singing songs/waiata of worship or songs that teach them about God and remind them of what he has done. Whatever practices we employ, we want them to be rewarding experiences—times the students look forward to. This will help instill in them a love for God, a love for others, and a love for the world.

Love can also inspire us to extend grace toward one another, and to be patient with each other, recognising that we are each a work in progress. Such love will provide the conditions for students to respond in love toward God and others.

Hope and human formation

Human beings are also teleological beings—people with longings and hopes for the future. These hopes can be misdirected or align with gospel hope. Gospel hope reminds us that we are destined to be conformed to the image of Christ,¹⁰¹ and that while we currently bear the image of the “earthly man” (Adam), “so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man” (Jesus Christ).¹⁰² Gospel hope reminds us that there will be a day when people will dwell in harmony and *shalom*, and there will be no more sickness, strife, or mourning.¹⁰³ Through such practices as prayer, worship, Scripture, and celebration, teachers can provide students with a vision of human flourishing that differs from visions provided by the world. Students can be reminded of what God will accomplish and look forward to the day when God's kingdom comes in all its fullness.

Motivated by this hope-inspired vision, we can co-labour with Christ as we pray and work to see more of God's kingdom come. Through prayer and acts of service, we can provide students with opportunities to develop Christ-like character qualities such as kindness, patience, hope, perseverance, wisdom, peacemaking, courage, initiative, honesty, and faithfulness.

⁹⁹ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 52-53, 63.

¹⁰⁰ As one teacher put it, “Students are not just brains on sticks.”

¹⁰¹ Rom. 8:29. See also 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:47-49; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10.

¹⁰² 1 Cor. 15:49.

¹⁰³ Rev. 21:4-5; 22:2.

Community/People

Christian educators affirm that God is triune in nature and holy and loving in character. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit co-exist in loving relationship, and model for us what it means to live in community.¹⁰⁴ Just as the Father, Son, and Spirit are holy, so we are called to be holy.¹⁰⁵ And just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live in unity, mutual submission, generosity, harmony, trust, and love, so we, who are united in Christ by the Holy Spirit, are called to love one another, respect one another, submit to one another, and work towards trust and unity. As those in Christ who participate in this trinitarian life, we are called to live as persons in community/hapori, whether as trustees, teachers, parents, ancillary staff, prayer partners, or management. Faith, hope, and love inform our educational communities and guide us as we relate to one another.

God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit co-exist in loving relationship, and model for us what it means to live in community.

Faith and community/people

We are called to be communities of faith and faithfulness, grounded in the biblical story, and shaped by the gospel. As such, we value a culture where there is a high degree of trust. We recognise that as individuals we are at different points in our journey of faith, but we share a common goal—to become more like Jesus Christ. Therefore, we foster unity but not conformity. We value the freedom to explore ideas and better ways of doing things. We listen to one another, give each other the benefit of the doubt, refuse to gossip, and are quick to forgive.

Love and community/people

Love is the hallmark of distinctively Christian communities.¹⁰⁶ As people loved by God, we are called to love God and love one another, serve one another, support one another, and make room for one another. Jesus' prayer for his disciples was that they love one another as he loved them and that they would be one as he and the Father are one.¹⁰⁷ When we love one another we image the love of the triune God.¹⁰⁸

Love enables us to embrace diverse cultures, value our bi-cultural heritage, welcome new staff, students, and families, adopt inclusive practices, and value teamwork as well as the individual. Love leads us to acknowledge and celebrate such things as personal growth, achievements and milestones, and the heritage of our schools. What we celebrate reveals what we value. We recognise that it is important to reward students for perseverance as much as academic achievement, for compassion and servant-heartedness as much as talent.

¹⁰⁴ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 76.

¹⁰⁵ Exod. 19:5-6; Lev. 20:26; Deut. 7:6; Col. 3:12; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:9. See also Matt. 5:48 which echoes Lev. 20:26 and links God's holiness/perfection to God's mercy and loving our enemies.

¹⁰⁶ Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37-40; John 15:12-13, 17; Rom. 5:8, 14; 8:31-39; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; Gal. 5:6; Eph. 3:16-19; 1 John 3:1-2.

¹⁰⁷ John 15:2 and 17:22.

¹⁰⁸ Plantinga, *Engaging God's World*, 33.

Hope and community/people

Hope enables us to believe the best of people, and to work toward genuine reconciliation, knowing God has reconciled to himself all things through Christ.¹⁰⁹ Hope provides us with a reason for using restorative practices to settle disputes. Hope motivates us to pray “Your kingdom come” in our lives, in our schools, and on our various boards, trusts, and other groups. Hope encourages us in times of sadness, grief, and tragedy. Hope enables teachers to never give up on their students. Hope inspires teachers to continue to work for their students, to encourage them to persevere, and to hope for them even when they have no hope for themselves.

¹⁰⁹ 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Col. 1:20.

Community Engagement

Faith, hope, and love enable us to grow into faithful communities, working out our distinctive vocation in the world. This is expressed through service, mission, and care for the environment.

Faith and community engagement

Through the lens of faith, we no longer see people as simply “other.” We see them as human beings of immense dignity and worth. We see them as people who bear the image of God. We also acknowledge what is sometimes called “common grace” i.e. the grace of God that is common to all humanity. This includes God’s providential care of people.¹¹⁰ It also recognises that God has endowed human beings with a conscience, and with gifts, abilities, and wisdom in varying degrees. Therefore, with humility we work alongside others of good will for the benefit of our local communities, towns, or cities.¹¹¹ We endeavour to listen and relate in ways that are respectful and open-up conversations. In this our teachers’ model for students how to engage with others in society.

Love and community engagement

Love requires us to pay attention to what God is doing in the world, and to the needs of those around us. Love inspires teachers and students to serve the school and wider community. By engaging in service learning, students learn the value of serving others and are given opportunities to grow as servant-hearted leaders.

Love also encourages teachers and students to participate in mission. The mission of God (*missio Dei*) entails God’s work of redemption and the restoration of creation. Our mission “means our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s own mission within the history of God’s world for the redemption of God’s creation.”¹¹² In a narrower sense, mission is about bringing the gospel, in word and deed, to a particular group of people in a particular place.¹¹³ Our teachers provide students with opportunities to pray for, support, and/or participate in mission. They endeavour to be culturally sensitive and aware of the potential impact of their work on neighbouring churches and families. They endeavour to maintain good communication with those who are already working in this area.

Our mission “means our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s own mission within the history of God’s world for the redemption of God’s creation.”

-- Chris Wright

God’s love also inspires us be wise stewards of the earth, its resources and its creatures.¹¹⁴ Students can learn about the wonders of God’s creation, and explore ways to help preserve and restore habitats, conserve resources, engage in sustainable practices, and care for God’s creatures. Faithful

¹¹⁰ For example, God makes his sun rise and rain fall on the just and unjust (Matt. 5:45-46).

¹¹¹ The prophet Jeremiah encouraged the Israelites living in Babylon to “seek the peace and welfare of the city,” because if the city prospered, then so would they (Jer. 29:7).

¹¹² Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), 22-23.

¹¹³ Newbiggin, *Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 121.

¹¹⁴ Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15. See also Ex. 20:10; 23:4-5; Deut. 5:14; Matt. 6:26-30; Luke 13:15.

stewardship can be a partnering with Christ whose work of redemption includes the restoration of all creation.

Love also invites us to pray for and participate in the life of the local church.¹¹⁵ And love guides our professional relationships with groups such as the Ministry of Education and Education Council.

Hope and community engagement

Hope motivates us to participate with Christ in bringing hope to the world. Hope inspires us to work to see change in the world, whether it is a class of students cleaning up our local beaches, baking cakes to raise funds for a mission, visiting a retirement village, serving in the local church, or taking part in mission. Such practices provide students with opportunities to grow into servant-hearted leaders and to participate in God's work of renewal in the world.

Hope can also provide an incentive for innovation and creativity as we seek to address the needs of our local communities and to solve the problems of the world in a new way. Hope enables us to envision, imagine, and work for a future of *shalom*.

¹¹⁵ Gal. 3:26-29; Col. 3:9-17; Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:9-10.

Knowing/Learning

When Jesus was asked, what is the greatest commandment, he replied, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your *mind*, and with all your strength.”¹¹⁶ Jesus expects his disciples to love God with all their minds. This entails that Christians *think*.¹¹⁵ Such thinking includes reflection on our faith and on what it means to follow Christ today. It also means thinking about how we view knowledge, how we view the world, and how we navigate our way in the world.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Rom. 12:2a

Faith and knowing/learning

For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, people thought that faith/belief was “a weak form” of knowing.¹¹⁸ What mattered were objective facts that could be proven.¹¹⁹ More recently it has become evident that many important beliefs cannot be proven. This includes beliefs underlying western culture.¹²⁰ For instance, scientists engage in research because they believe there is something meaningful to be discovered, and that it is accessible to the human mind.¹²¹ Such belief or intuition cannot be proven, but it is essential to scientific endeavour. Christians can affirm this belief, because we also believe that God, who has revealed himself as trustworthy and loving, created the heavens and earth and created us in his image. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that creation is filled with meaning and purpose, and that it can be apprehended by the human mind.¹²²

Michael Polanyi has shown that much of what we know is a kind of ‘tacit knowledge’ that we may not be able to articulate or prove but which is essential to our living and being in the world. Much of what a student learns is a kind of ‘tacit knowledge’ that is caught rather than taught when the student commits himself or herself to becoming an apprentice and learning from the teacher.¹²³ Such commitment to learning and focused attention requires a degree of faith/trust. This doesn't mean that we should abandon doubt and skepticism when this is warranted. Nor does it mean we should accept all claims to truth uncritically. However, it does mean that faith is a valid form of knowing.

God has given human beings the ability to apprehend and comprehend the world. Without this we would be unable to fulfil the calling God has placed on our lives. “If we are to love God, we must have reliable apprehension of God. If we are to love our neighbours, we must truly know them such

¹¹⁶ Mark 12:30; Matt. 22:37; Luke 10:27.

¹¹⁷ John Stackhouse, *Need to Know: Vocation as the Heart of Christian Epistemology* (Oxford, 2014), 3, 4, 56.

¹¹⁸ Alister McGrath, *Theology: The Basics*, 3rd ed. (Chichester, UK: John Wiley and Sons, 2012), 2.

¹¹⁹ This “positivism” left Christians in a difficult, although not impossible position. For example, while we may be unable to prove to others that Jesus rose from the dead, it is certainly reasonable to believe this, given the historical witness.

¹²⁰ McGrath, *Theology: The Basics*, 2.

¹²¹ Strom, *Ways of Knowing*, 61; Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 71, 86.

¹²² Strom, *Ways of Knowing*, 57; Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 71, 86. This is true even though creation is currently subjected to frustration and decay (Rom. 8:20-22).

¹²³ Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1958), 53. See also Strom, *Ways of Knowing*, 61; and Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 196.

that we can care for them aright. And if we are to cultivate the rest of our planet, we must have extensive and reliable knowledge of it."¹²⁴ Thus we commit ourselves to learning about God, about our fellow human beings, and about the world God has created. We endeavour to search out the truth wherever it may be found, trusting God to provide us with what we need to know to fulfil the vocation he calls us to.¹²⁵

To say that we can apprehend and comprehend the world does not mean that we can know all there is to know infallibly and comprehensively. "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."¹²⁶ We recognise that our finitude limits what we can know, and our fallenness can distort what we know.¹²⁷ However, we also acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit in renewing our minds.¹²⁸ Therefore, with a degree of epistemological humility, we commit ourselves to exploring and learning so that we can serve God faithfully. As humble inquirers on a journey of discovery, we seek to know so that we can better fulfil our vocations.¹²⁹

We are also called to be discerning and to critically examine what we see and hear. As Paul wrote, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."¹³⁰ The Scriptures are our primary source for doing this. The overarching narrative of Scripture and the gospel of Jesus Christ informs our faith, our hermeneutics (i.e. how we interpret Scripture and the world) and our worldviews (i.e. our baseline assumptions and culture). We endeavour to think theologically about all of life. We seek to understand the ideas that undergird culture and to weigh them in the light of Scripture. Like Paul, we want to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ,"¹³¹ as we are renewed in knowledge after the image of God.¹³² We aim to sift out the good from the bad, truth from falsehood, and wisdom from foolishness, and to find those points of contact that align with Christian faith. In this way, our teachers can model for students how to engage with culture. We want our students to understand the world in which they live, to be able to

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1 Cor. 13:12

¹²⁴ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 86. See also 71, 86, 95, 242.

¹²⁵ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 19-21.

¹²⁶ 1 Cor. 13:12.

¹²⁷ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 72.

¹²⁸ Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:10.

¹²⁹ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 105.

¹³⁰ Rom. 12:2.

¹³¹ 2 Cor. 10:5.

¹³² Col. 3:10.

navigate their way through the ideas, issues, and challenges of real life, and to do so with wisdom, clarity, intelligence, sensitivity, and compassion.¹³³ When students see Christian faith modelled in a profoundly attractive, theologically rigorous, and culturally sensitive manner, it will capture their hearts and imaginations.

Love and knowing/learning

Since God created all things, all true knowledge/wisdom (mātauranga) is a gift from God and occurs within and for relationship.¹³⁴ All our knowing and all our thinking “is made possible in the One in whom we live and move and have our being (Acts:17:28).”¹³⁵ God who knows us fully, is a God of love. God created out of love and redeemed us out of love. Therefore, when we research and make discoveries, we are thinking God’s thoughts after him.¹³⁶ And when we learn about God and his world, we do so for love of God and in service of others and creation. Love is “operative in our thinking.”¹³⁷

After Paul encountered the risen Christ on the road to Damascus,¹³⁸ he began to re-think what it meant to be human. He realised that the old ways of thinking that separated Jews from Gentiles, slaves from free, and male and female were torn down in Christ.¹³⁹ This knowledge enabled Paul to engage with others in a way he had not done before. He wrote, “To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews... To those not having the law I became like one not having the law... To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel.” This was a way of knowing born of love. The love of Christ changed the way Paul thought about people and related to people.¹⁴¹

As communities of learning, we recognise there will be a breadth of views among us on various topics. Therefore, we commit to listening to one another and being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. “Love prompts us to respect and to pay attention to the other. Love prompts us to give the benefit of the doubt rather than impose an unbearable burden of proof. Love prompts us to empathetic awareness, to realising how someone could actually think that, after all. Love prompts us to consider even changing our mind.”¹⁴²

“Love prompts us to respect and to pay attention to the other. Love prompts us to give the benefit of the doubt... Love prompts us to empathetic awareness, to realizing how someone could actually think that... Love prompts us to consider even changing our mind.”

-- John G. Stackhouse Jr.

¹³³ As one teacher put it, we want our students to develop “Sharp minds and soft hearts.”

¹³⁴ Strom, *Ways of Knowing*, 32, 38.

¹³⁵ Strom, *Ways of Knowing*, 37.

¹³⁶ Strom, *Ways of Knowing* (Course Notes).

¹³⁷ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 189.

¹³⁸ Rom. 5:8; 8:32-39; Eph. 3:16-19.

¹³⁹ Rom. 10:12; 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 5:16; Gal. 3:28; 5:6; Col. 3:11.

¹⁴⁰ 1 Cor. 9:20-23a.

¹⁴¹ 1 Cor. 4:16; 12:31b-13:7; 14:1a; Gal. 5:6.

¹⁴² Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 189.

As Christian educators we hold to that which is essential to Christian faith and practice, while being gracious with others when it comes to that which is non-essential. As stated in the evangelical dictum:

*In essentials, unity.
In non-essentials, liberty.
In all things, charity.*¹⁴³

Hope and knowing/learning

Most people live with longings or hopes for the future and work toward future goals. When scientists anticipate what might be and devise ways to test this, their anticipation is a form of hope.¹⁴⁴ The gospel gives us further grounds for hope. Christ has been raised from the dead and now reigns in heaven, guiding creation toward its God ordained *telos* or goal/end point. To comprehend this and to act on it is a knowing born of hope.

We endeavour to prepare students for a future that is not yet seen in its entirety.¹⁴⁵ Yet we can look to the future with joyful anticipation, knowing that Christ is the Lord of history. We can engage our minds as we participate in Christ's work of restoration, reconciliation, and renewal in the world. We can explore and discover, imagine and innovate, question and critique, problem solve and plan in service of creating a better world. As Christian educators we are called toward future possibilities by hope, providing students with the skills and knowledge they need to become life-long learners.

¹⁴³ For a discussion on this evangelical dictum see, "On the Origin of the Sentence: '*In necessariis unitas, in non-necessariis (or, dubiis) libertas, in utrisque (or, omnibus) caritas.*'" In Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 7 (1910), 650–53.

¹⁴⁴ Strom, *Ways of Knowing* (Course Notes).

¹⁴⁵ Horizon School website.

Curriculum/Pedagogy

Faith, hope, and love can inform the way we view and implement curriculum, and our pedagogy.

Faith and curriculum/pedagogy

A curriculum inspired by faith recognises that since Jesus Christ now reigns at the right hand of God the Father and is Lord/Te Ariki over all things,¹⁴⁶ there is no area of life, or learning, or the school curriculum that is separate from Christ.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, as Christian educators we endeavour to teach our subjects from a Christ-centred perspective. We consider how the overarching story of Scripture and the gospel of Jesus Christ can shape the curriculum and be the lens through which the curriculum is viewed, critiqued, and implemented.

There are many ways this can be done. For example, when planning a lesson, working with a textbook, reading a work of literature, or watching a film, we can consider what messages are being conveyed. Four questions can guide us here:

- What does this text/film/lesson say the world is like?
- What kind of wisdom is being promoted here?
- What does it say about what it means to be human?
- What vision of the good life, *shalom*, and human flourishing is being presented?

Key to our faith is the biblical story, which can be summed up in the Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Renewal framework. When planning a unit/topic/lesson we can adopt this framework as a guide. Four sets of questions can guide us here:

- *Creation*: What can we learn about God and his creation? How is this topic connected to other areas of learning as part of God's world?¹⁴⁸ How can this lead to wonder and awe? Where do we see creative activity? How can we develop the hidden potential in creation? What new things can we create?
- *Fall*: Where is there brokenness, pain, strife, tragedy, struggle, destruction, falsehood, flawed thinking, etc? How are problems defined? What might be the causes of these problems? What impact do they have on people and/or on creation? How does this make us feel? Where might God be in these situations?

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¹⁴⁶ Matt. 28:18; Acts 7:56; 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Eph. 1:9-10, 20-23; 2:21-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 2:9-10; 3:1; Heb. 1:3-4; 10:12-13.

¹⁴⁷ Burggraaf, ed. *Transformational Education*, 74.

¹⁴⁸ We do not live in a compartmentalised world. Therefore, it is important for students to see how one subject area connects with and/or impacts other areas of learning as part of God's world. While teachers are required to maintain the integrity of their subjects and meet the learning requirements of that subject, they can still help students see how one subject relates to other fields of learning.

- *Redemption*: What solutions are offered? Are these adequate? How can we respond to the brokenness and problems we encounter? Do we see examples of things being put right? Where can we see wisdom, truth, compassion, healing, justice, mercy, or reconciliation that we can support? What might the Spirit of God be calling us to do in these situations?
- *Renewal*: How can we join with Christ in bringing restoration, renewal, and *shalom*? What opportunities are there for new discovery, design, invention, development, innovation, imagination, and new creation?

Curriculum and pedagogy informed by faith will provide students with opportunities to explore, understand and appreciate God's world, and lead, design, build, compose, paint, write, and create in service of human flourishing.

These four sets of questions are not exhaustive. You may think of others.

Curriculum and pedagogy informed by faith will provide students with opportunities to explore, understand, and appreciate God's world, and lead, design, build, compose, paint, write, and create in service of human flourishing. Curriculum and pedagogy informed by faith will also enable schools to discern whether new resources, programmes, practices, and promotions are beneficial for the school or whether they need to be set aside.

Love and curriculum/pedagogy

A curriculum inspired by love will encourage students to see how their learning connects with love for God, love for others, and care for the world. Three questions can guide teachers here as they plan their lessons/units. In what ways can this lesson/unit:

- express gratitude to God, or encourage love for God?
- celebrate relationship and encourage us to love, serve, and bless others?
- express joy in God's creation or encourage stewardship and care for God's creation?

Curriculum inspired by love will encourage students to see how their learning connects with love for God, love for others, and care for the world.

As students' loves are impacted by their learning they will want to engage with God's world. Such opportunities will enable them to use their skills and knowledge for the benefit of others, and to appreciate that "education is not a matter of 'consuming knowledge' for personal advantage."¹⁴⁹

A pedagogy inspired by love will provide learning experiences that are rewarding and that allow students to follow their love for God, others, and creation. Teachers will see the value of every student, be aware of their interests, talents, abilities, and needs, and will create learning opportunities that facilitate their development and encourage authentic expressions of that learning.¹⁵⁰ Schools motivated by love will support teachers working with challenging students and will work together to develop strategies and resources to help meet their needs.

¹⁴⁹ Burggraaf, ed. *Transformational Education*, 150.

¹⁵⁰ Burggraaf, ed. *Transformational Education*, 44.

Hope and curriculum/pedagogy

A curriculum inspired by hope is a curriculum that directs learning toward the future and what is possible. It will form students for vocations of service, *shalom*, and restoration. It will foster curiosity, exploration, and joy in discovering God's world. It will encourage mathematical problem solving, scientific inquiry, technological innovation, and design and creativity in service of human flourishing.¹⁵¹ It will provide space for critical thinking and discernment. It will encourage students to become lifelong learners.

A pedagogy of hope will mean that teachers never give up on their students. They will continue to pray for them, will evaluate and change their pedagogy where needed, and will exercise patience and perseverance. They will work to discover the innate gifts students' have and will name these and call them into the light where they can be encouraged to grow and develop. A pedagogy of hope will also enable teachers to "make use of new educational insights and technologies with biblical discernment."¹⁵² A pedagogy of hope will encourage teachers and those in governance to see what God is doing among their students and in the school community, and will work toward restoration, reconciliation, and renewal.

A curriculum inspired by hope is a curriculum that directs learning toward the future and what is possible... It will foster curiosity, exploration, and joy in discovering God's world. It will encourage mathematical problem solving, scientific inquiry, technological innovation, and design and creativity in service of human flourishing.

¹⁵¹ Burggraaf, ed. *Transformational Education*, 142.

¹⁵² Burggraaf, ed. *Transformational Education*, 127.

Work/Vocation

Genesis 1:28 reveals that human beings are meant to engage in productive work.¹⁵³ They are called to fill the earth, explore it, “take what God created and work it, cultivate it.”¹⁵⁴ The word “vocation,” however, has a broader meaning than work. It comes from the Latin word *vocare*, “to call.”¹⁵⁵ So we could describe vocation as “that to which I am called as a human being, living my life before the face of God.”¹⁵⁶ It includes one’s work, but also one’s relationships and responsibilities to friends, family, neighbours, and the world. And as disciples of Jesus Christ, our vocation includes participating with Christ in God’s mission for the world.

Faith and work/vocation

Christian educators equip students to find productive and meaningful work. They also help students to see how work can become part of their vocation. Whether they end up in service industries, business, politics, education, health, farming, construction, mission, design, technology, or research, their work can become an avenue for blessing others and contributing toward the *shalom* and restoration of creation.

Faith can transform the most mundane work into a vocation when it is undertaken with diligence and care, prayer and commitment to one’s co-workers, service to others and a willingness to share the fruits of one’s labours. There is a story that captures this. “A 12th century Bishop is walking through the emerging structure of a church being built in his diocese. As he wanders through the construction site, he asks a stonemason what he is doing and the stonemason replies, ‘I’m cutting some blocks.’ He walks further and asks the next stonemason what he is doing, ‘I’m building a wall.’ The Bishop moves on and inquires again. The response, ‘I’m raising a cathedral to the glory of God.’”¹⁵⁷ It’s about seeing the bigger picture, the consequences of our actions, and the way our work can contribute toward restoration, *shalom*, and renewal.

Jesus dignified work. As a young person he learned his father’s trade, working as a *tektōn* (i.e. a worker in wood or stone).¹⁵⁸ Jesus was also an apprentice to his heavenly Father. He learned to read and write and became well versed in the Scriptures.¹⁵⁹ He also became skilled in relating to people and observing human behavior. The Apostle Paul was a tent maker. He made tents while in Corinth so as not to place a burden on the new church he had planted.¹⁶⁰ His work was in service of his mission. Peter, James, and John were fishermen. This was part of their identity. So when Jesus called them, he encouraged them to see their new mission in terms of fishing. Only from now on they would be fishing for people. Jesus dignified their work while at the same time widening its scope and drawing it up into the mission of God.

¹⁵³ The idea of work is picked up again in Genesis 2:5.

¹⁵⁴ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 58.

¹⁵⁵ Stackhouse, *Need to Know*, 67.

¹⁵⁶ Steven Garber, *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014), 11.

¹⁵⁷ Burggraaf, *Transformational Education*, 10.

¹⁵⁸ Mark 6:3.

¹⁵⁹ See for example Luke 2:46-47; 4:16-20; John 8:6.

¹⁶⁰ Acts 18:3; 1 Cor. 9:18; 2 Cor. 11:7-9.

Here are some things for students to consider when thinking about future work and their vocation.

- The connection between their future work and God's work i.e. understanding how their work can contribute to God's mission in the world.
- Whether there is a good fit between who they are (their interests, abilities, and the call God has placed on their hearts) and their future work.
- Whether there is an ethical fit between their faith and their future work, so they can see its value, how it can bless others, and how it can contribute to making the world a better place.
- In the workplace they will witness not only by what they say, but also by what they do and how they do it.¹⁶¹
- In the workplace they will face challenges.¹⁶² They will also probably have many jobs in their lifetime and may need to make more than one career change.

Love and work/vocation

Love requires that we are thoughtful and careful in our work, thinking through the consequences of our actions and the impact they may have on others and on creation. Many of the problems in the world today eventuated because someone acted without a sense of accountability and responsibility toward others and the world. They failed to pay attention to what they were doing and the impact of their actions. Love calls us to pay attention to what God is doing, to what he has called us to do, to what is going on around us, to the time in which we live, to what we have to offer, and to the implications of our actions. There are three questions that can guide us here:

Love calls us to pay attention to what God is doing, to what he has called us to do, to what is going on around us, to the time in which we live, to what we have to offer, and to the implications of our actions.

- What are we *called to*?
- Who or what are we on *behalf of*?
- What are we called to *pay attention to*?

Hope and work/vocation

The *telos* or goal/end point of our hope is the return of Christ and the restoration and renewal of all creation. Revelation 21 has cast for us a vision of what this will be like. There will come a day when sin, evil, pain, sorrow, and death will be eradicated, and God's dwelling place will be among people. This vision inspires us "to look forward in hope to a creation restored to wholeness. Every facet of it is to be brought back to what God has intended for it. And within that glorious fullness and perfect wholeness there is a place for us."¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ For example, they can witness by showing respect toward others through keeping commitments, delivering on time, being honest in their dealings, being careful and conscientious, being willing to work hard, and being considerate and respectful of others.

¹⁶² For example, they may not get the job they want; they may work with a difficult supervisor or co-worker; they may be tempted to twist the truth or be pressured to take ethically dubious short cuts to save time or money.

¹⁶³ Bartholomew and Goheen, *Drama of Scripture*, 233. See e.g. Rev. 21:1-22:5; Rom. 8:11, 18-30; and 1 Cor. 15:20-26.

Now we live between the 'already' and 'not yet' of the kingdom of God. But we are not simply in a holding pattern waiting for Christ to return or waiting to die and go to heaven. We are called to participate with Christ in bringing about reconciliation, restoration, *shalom*, and renewal. We may not be certain of the outcome of our work, but we can be confident that God is at work in the world, providentially guiding it toward its God-intended destiny. So, we continue to pray "Your kingdom come," as Jesus taught us.¹⁶⁴ And we continue to respond to the Holy Spirit as we work to see God's kingdom come on earth as in heaven.

"Meaningful action in history is possible only when there is some vision of a future goal."¹⁶⁵ So whether we are in governance or education, engaged in mission or stewarding the earth and its resources, creating works of art or working for peace, truth, reconciliation, and justice,¹⁶⁶ our work/vocation can become part of God's mission and an expression of gospel hope for the world. We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

¹⁶⁵ Newbigin, *Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 114.

¹⁶⁶ These are just a sample of the things God may call us to do.

¹⁶⁷ Eph. 2:10. See also 1 Cor. 15:58.

Appendix A: The Kingsway Trust Story

In 1974 Graham and Joan Braddock purchased a life-style block in Dairy Flat, north of Auckland, and began attending Red Beach Methodist Church. One afternoon at church, Graham listened to Cathie Crawley share about a Christ-centred preschool she had established. As she was speaking, Graham had the sense that God was saying, "Do it here!" Graham shared the vision with others, and after much prayer the leaders at Red Beach Methodist endorsed the idea. They made their church facilities available, and in 1982, Hillary Monk, from YWAM University of the Nations in Hawaii, set up the Red Beach Christian Preschool.

Graham also saw the need for a Christian School. He was concerned about some of the trends in society and saw the need for raising up godly leaders. He wanted a school that could be a working model of Christ-centred education, where the Scriptures were held in high regard as the inspired and authoritative word of God, and where students could be disciplined in the faith and equipped to become servant leaders in all walks of life. So, in 1985 a steering committee was formed to pray and work toward the establishment of a Christian school in the region.

On 8 September 1986, KingsWay School opened its doors at the Red Beach site with one teacher, Helen Pearson (nee Hulse), and ten pupils aged five to seven. The school was non-denominational so that it could serve the whole Body of Christ, and an independent Trust was formed to take ownership of the assets and to be keepers of the vision.

KingsWay School grew rapidly and there was soon a pressing need to find a new site. One day, Bruce McNair and Graham Braddock stood looking across the Orewa Estuary at surrounding farmland. It looked like a site Bruce had seen in a dream. After much prayer, the land at the bottom of Jelas Road was purchased for \$186,000. John Bolam handled the Resource Consent Application, Wendy Bolam proposed the idea of hexagonal shaped classrooms, and Ron Youngman organised the construction team. With Joe Darby and Bob Cook, and volunteer parents and teachers, the team built the first blocks of classrooms. The four houses of KingsWay School are named after some of these key figures: Braddock, Youngman, Darby, and Cook.

More than thirty years have passed since KingsWay School opened. Since then the school's roll has expanded to over 1,450 students (Years 1-13) spread over two campuses, and the farmland that once surrounded the school has given way to residential housing. Two new preschools have been added to The Kingsway Trust network and three new schools: Horizon School in Mahurangi, Snells Beach (Years 1-13); Jireh Christian School in Avondale, West Auckland (Years 1-8); and KingsGate School in Pukekohe, South Auckland (Years 1-8). The Kingsway Trust, in partnership with the New Zealand Christian Proprietors Trust, continues to serve God and Christ-centred education in the greater Auckland region and throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, and seeks to hear what the Spirit of God is saying to them and their schools in each generation.

Appendix B: Meaning of Terms

Evangelical

The word “evangelical” comes from the Greek *euangelion*, meaning “gospel” or “good news.” To be an evangelical is to be a gospel person. Evangelicals are a diverse group of believers from many denominations and nations.¹⁶⁸ The core theological convictions of evangelicals provide unity in diversity.

Evangelicals take the Bible seriously and believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The historian David Bebbington has outlined four distinctives of evangelicalism:

- **Biblicism:** a high regard for the Bible as the ultimate authority for life and faith;
- **Crucicentrism:** a focus on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity;
- **Conversionism:** the belief that people's lives need to be transformed, beginning with being “born again” and through a life-long process of following Jesus;
- **Activism:** the expression of the gospel through evangelism, mission, and working for social reform/ social justice.

The gospel

The word “gospel” (Maori: rongopai) comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, meaning “good news.”¹⁶⁹ Jesus came announcing the “good news” of the kingdom—that the kingdom of God was near (Mark 1:14)—that God's reign was breaking in through Jesus' person and ministry. God was coming to save his people as he had promised. The evidence of this was that the blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame walked, the oppressed were freed, and the poor heard the good news.

For the New Testament authors, writing after Jesus' resurrection, the “good news” was that God had indeed come to save his people and all humankind, and he had done this through his Son Jesus, the Christ/Messiah, who was crucified, but whom God vindicated by raising him from the dead and enthroning him as Lord over all creation (Mark 1:1; Rom. 1:1-4).¹⁷⁰ In short, the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Evangelicalism is an expression of Christian faith that includes people from Reformed traditions (e.g. Calvinist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Brethren); Holiness traditions (e.g. Wesleyan Methodist and Salvation Army); Anglican/Episcopalian, Baptist, Mennonite, Pentecostal, and Charismatic churches.

¹⁶⁹ An early example of its use from around the turn of the first century comes from an inscription found in Asia Minor. It praises the emperor Augustus as the saviour who ended war, and it celebrates his birth as the beginning of the “good news” of peace for the world.

¹⁷⁰ K. Schenck, “Gospels: Good News,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed., 342.

¹⁷¹ In another sense, the gospel is Christ. Christ is the Word made flesh who dwelt among us. And given that Christ is alive today and present with us by his Spirit, Christ is, in a very real sense, the good news.¹⁷⁴ Joel B. Green, ed., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 771-774.

The Gospels

When we speak of “the Gospels” (plural, with a capital G), we mean the four canonical accounts of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They are called Gospels because each author gave an account of the gospel i.e. the good news of Jesus Christ. Each author provided a different perspective on the significance of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

Messiah

The term “Messiah” (Greek: *Christos*) means “anointed one.” The Israelites longed for the day when God would return in power to defeat their enemies, gather their exiles, and restore the kingdom of Israel. Many believed this would coincide with the arrival of god’s agent, an anointed Davidic king (Messiah). Some also looked forward to a priestly figure, and others looked forward to a prophet like Moses. Jesus incorporated all these hopes and expectations. He is the kingly Messiah, the son of David (Matt. 16:13-17; Mark 1:1; John 4:25-26; Acts 2:29-36); the High Priest of a new covenant (Heb. 4:14; 5:5-10; 8:6-13); and the prophet greater than Moses (Matt. 5:1, 17; John 1:17; Acts 3:22-26; Heb. 1:1-2; 3:2-6). Jesus’ preferred title for himself, however, was the Son of Man (Mark 14:61b-62. See also Dan. 7:13-14).

Mission

The word “mission” can be understood in a broad sense and in a narrow sense. When given its fullest meaning, the mission of God (*missio Dei*) is God’s work of bringing about the redemption, restoration and renewal of all creation. God invites us to participate in this mission. As such, “our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s own mission within the history of God’s world for the redemption of God’s creation.”¹⁷²

In a narrower sense, mission is about proclaiming the gospel, in word and deed, to a group of people in a particular place. Lesslie Newbigin defines “missions” as those activities undertaken “to bring the gospel to places or situations where it is not heard, to create a Christian presence in a place or situation where there is no such presence or no effective presence.”¹⁷³

Old Testament

Put simply, the Protestant Old Testament (which has thirty-nine books) is essentially a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (i.e. the Masoretic Text [MT]), although it follows the Greek Septuagint (LXX) in order and division of books. The Hebrew Bible (which has twenty-four books) begins with Genesis and ends with Chronicles. It has three main divisions: the Torah (the first five books of the Bible, known as the Pentateuch or the books of Moses); the Prophets (including Joshua through to 2 Kings); and the Writings (including Chronicles). The New Testament sometimes refers to these divisions (Matt. 5:17; 7:12; Luke 24:27, 44; John 1:45; Acts 13:15).

¹⁷² Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God*, 22-23.

¹⁷³ Newbigin, *Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 121.

Repentance

The English word “repentance” translates the Greek *metanoia* (meaning “a change of mind”) and *epistrophē* (meaning “to turn toward something or someone.”) In response to the gospel, repentance is about turning from sin and one’s former way of life and turning towards God. It is usually accompanied by a sense of regret about past behaviour. *Metanoia* and *epistrophē* were used to translate the Hebrew *šûb/yûb*, meaning “turning.” This was the word the prophets used when calling the Israelites to return/turn back to God.¹⁷⁴ In today’s cultural context, the word “repentance” can carry connotations of grovelling, self-loathing, and penance. Such connotations are not intended by the Greek words, *metanoia* and *epistrophē*. Therefore, we have chosen to use a more direct translation, and speak of people “turning toward God” or “turning back to God.”

Shalom

The Hebrew word *shalom* is usually translated “peace,” but it means more than the absence of war. *Shalom* denotes wellbeing, wholeness, security, flourishing, health, and harmony. *Shalom* is what Adam and Eve experienced in the garden of Eden before the fall. Israel gained a measure of *shalom* after Solomon was installed as king and Israel had rest from war and enjoyed a time of peace and fruitfulness. *Shalom* is what Jesus promised his disciples. In Scripture, *shalom* is the fruit of righteousness/justice and it is what God intends for all creation. Chris Marshall describes the *shalom* of the future kingdom as: “the absence of war; the ending of infirmity and disease; peace in humanity’s relationship with God; the restoration of luxuriant fruitfulness in nature; even the end of violence in the animal kingdom.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Joel B. Green, ed., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 771-774.

¹⁷⁵ Chris Marshall, *Kingdom Come: The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (Auckland, NZ: Impetus Publications, 1993), 27-28.

Appendix C: Recommended Reading

We commend to you the following works for further reading and professional development. Some of these books cover topics related to more than one of the following categories.

Holy Scripture

Allpress, Roshan., and Andrew Shamy, *The Insect and the Buffalo: How the Story of the Bible Changes Everything* (Auckland, NZ: Venn Foundation, 2009) (This short but engaging book introduces the reader to the grand narrative of Scripture, and explains why it is important to read Scripture with the whole story in mind).

Bartholomew, Craig G., and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding our Place in the Biblical Story*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014) (This book introduces the reader to the grand narrative of Scripture. It follows a Creation, Fall, Israel, Redemption, Church, New Creation framework, and covers many of the concepts discussed in this Theological Framework. We strongly recommend those who teach devotions, Scripture, Christian instruction, etc., to read this book).

Fee, Gordon D., and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014) (This book introduces the reader to the Bible and provides valuable guidance on how to read it well).

Wright, Tom. *Surprised by Hope* (London: SPCK, 2007). (This book talks about Christian hope and what the Bible teaches about the resurrection, Jesus' return, God's plans for creation, and how we can participate in this. Along the way, Wright corrects some common misunderstandings about life after death. This book is also applicable to the categories of Community Engagement and Work/Vocation).

Community/People

Hiebert, Paul G. "Conversion, Culture and Cognitive Categories" in *Gospel in Context* 1 (4) (1978), 24-29. <https://danutm.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/hiebert-paul-g-conversion-culture-and-cognitive-categories.pdf> (This article discusses what we mean by the word "Christian," and whether we understand this word as a bounded or centred set. It can help us reflect on where we stand in relation to Christ and the way we view other Christians. It can also help those engaged in cross-cultural mission, for it raises awareness about how language and concepts differ from one culture to another).

Curriculum/Pedagogy

Ken Dickens., et al., *Transformation by Design: The Big Picture. A Curriculum Development Resource for Christian Schools* (Penrith, NSW: National Institute for Christian Education, 2017) (This is a practical resource for teachers to help them integrate faith with learning when planning programmes, lessons, topics, etc. Note: the extent to which this book achieves its purpose will depend in part on the depth of the teacher's understanding of the grand narrative of Scripture and its Creation, Fall, Redemption, Renewal framework).

Roques, Mark. *Curriculum Unmasked: Towards a Christian Understanding of Education (Christians in Education, 1989)* (This work is somewhat dated and is written for a British context, but it is a valuable resource. We do not agree with all of Roques conclusions (particularly some of his assumptions around evolution). Nonetheless, this book can inspire teachers with ideas on how to integrate curriculum with Christian faith).

Community Engagement, Service, and Mission

Newbigin, Lesslie. "The Logic of Election" pages 80-88; and "Mission: Word, Deed, and New Being," pages 128-140 in *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998). (The first of these two chapters focuses on God's election of Israel and the church, not as an end in themselves, but as the means

through which God fulfills his purposes for all people. The second talks about the importance of both word and deed—proclaiming the gospel and working for justice and peace, and he sets these within the context of God's mission (*missio Dei*) and the Kingdom of God).

Wright, Christopher J.H., *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006) (This book takes the reader through Scripture with a view to the mission of God. Part I discusses how we can read Scripture in the light of God's mission. Part II tells how the missional God reveals himself through Israel, and through Jesus Christ, and confronts idolatry. Part III talks about God's missional people. It discusses the Exodus as a model of redemption, Jubilee as a model of restoration, and the missional dimension of the covenants. Part IV discusses the arena of mission i.e. the earth and the nations, God's plans for creation and our calling to mission).

Human Formation

Burggraaf, Harry, ed. *Transformational Education: A Framework for Christian Teaching* (Mount Evelyn Christian School, 2014). (This is a lovely introduction to Christian education. It covers many of the topics discussed in the Theological Framework, grounds them in Scripture, and draws out their implications for discipleship, formation, teaching, and learning. This work is arranged according to the acrostic, "transformational." This book is also applicable to the category of Curriculum/Pedagogy).

James Bryon Smith, *The Good and Beautiful Life: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: Hodder and Stoughton, 2010). (This book takes us through Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" and provides insights for growing in Christ-like character).

Knowing/Learning

Beech, Geoff., *Christians as Teachers: What Might it Look Like?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015). (This book focuses on what it means to teach Christianly. It discusses such things as God's purposes for students, the importance of the biblical story, underlying assumptions, knowledge, beliefs, and values, the classroom context, classroom practice, and pedagogy and learning. This book is also applicable to the category Curriculum/Pedagogy).

Stackhouse, John. *Need to Know: Vocation as the Heart of Christian Epistemology* (Oxford, 2014). (This book explores what it means to think Christianly and vocationally in a pluralistic and postmodern age. It covers such topics as epistemology, vocation, culture, and biblical interpretation. It offers a new epistemological model that can help Christians navigate their way through today's cultural challenges. Stackhouse believes God will give us what we need to know in order to do what he has called us to do).

Work/Vocation

Garber, Steven. *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014) (This book is a wonderful collection of stories about real people who are working out their vocation in the places to which God has called them. This book can help inspire teachers and students as they think about their work and vocation in life).

Plantinga Jr. Cornelius. *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning and Living* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002) (While this book is aimed at Tertiary Christian education, there is much that is relevant for Christian schooling in general. Plantinga discusses the significance of creation, the fall, redemption, and future hope for faith, learning, vocation, and engagement with the world. This book is also applicable to the categories of Scripture, Knowing/Learning and Community Engagement).

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