

## Christmas Message from EfM Chair

Meri Kirihimete.

Only a few more days till we celebrate the birth of Jesus – Emmanuel. God with us. A time to gather – with family, with friends, or even with friendly strangers. For some this is a wonderful celebratory time and for others, not so much.

To those of you who have completed 4 years of study this year – congratulations and well done! To those who have completed a year of study on the way to four years – well done and congratulations. I can testify that when you start out it seems to stretch off into the distance ... and three years later I have one more year to go!

I have been mulling over Madeleine L'Engle's poem, First Coming. It begins "He did not wait till the world was ready.." and ends with "... He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!". The idea that God wouldn't/couldn't/didn't wait for the 'perfect' time, but acted out of love anyway has been challenging me, as I, no doubt like you all, have watched, read, listened and wept at the pain we are inflicting on our world and each other. But the words of this poem by this American writer, written decades ago, have challenged me to keep moving, keep living, keep acting in ways that are the ways of God through Jesus Christ. It is easy to get despondent, it is easy to want to throw up our hands and hide away. But that is not what our calling is, as People of the Book, as Followers of the Way, as Christians who are about to celebrate the Good News of God come to earth to dwell among us.

So my hope, my prayer for all of us, as we look around our beautiful, blue home, spinning in space, is that we do not wait. That we act with compassion, speak with hope and pray with courage, recognising what we have been given with love by the one who is Creator Redeemer and Sustainer; who came as a baby born in a place that was colonised then and is suffering now; who knows what it is like to live as an undocumented Middle Eastern refugee.

The One, who above all, knows what it is to Rejoice! Rejoice! Even in our tarnished world. May we sing, dance, laugh, weep and rejoice whatever our situation this Christmas and as we move into the new year. See you next year.

Manaakitia me te aroha

Leanne

*Rev Leanne Munro*

*Chair*

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# 2025 Reunion Retreat Auckland 15-17 August

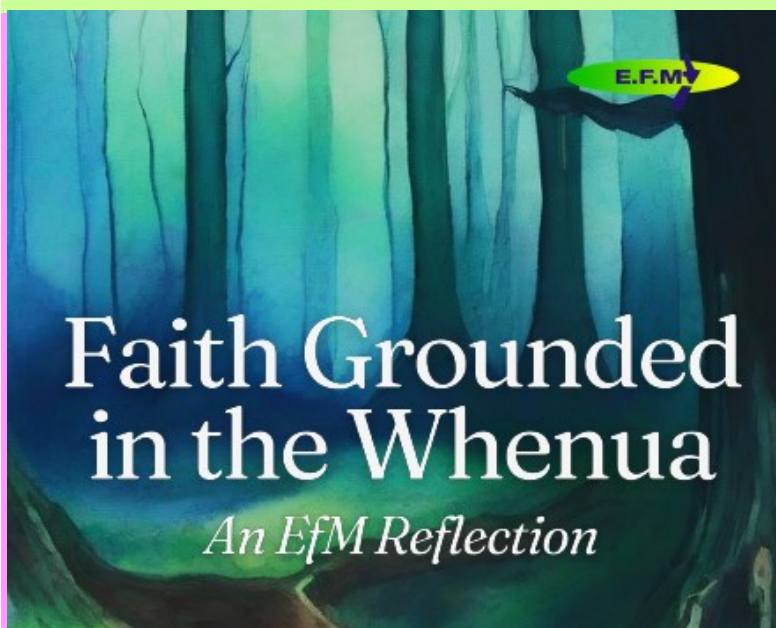
In 2025 Education for Ministry will be 50 years old. In New Zealand it has been offered since 1979 only 4 years after its launching in USA.



To celebrate we are holding a Reunion Retreat at St Francis Retreat Centre, Hillsborough. There will be time for worship, recalling our past, reconnecting with other EfMers and reflection on the future. There will also be free time for your personal reflection. Speakers include Sir David Moxon and Kevin Goodman, Executive Director of EfM.

Spaces are limited to 50 people (only 39 can be residential). A minimum of 30 people are required to proceed. The programme will start with at 12noon on Friday 15 August and finish at 3:30pm on Sunday. All meals are included.

A registration form is attached at the end of this newsletter. The cost will be \$385 residential or \$255 non-residential. A \$50 deposit is requested. This will be refunded if we do not meet minimum numbers or if you withdraw prior to 31 March 2025. Donations to allow reduced prices to be offered to those on restricted budgets would be appreciated.



## Faith Grounded in the Whenua

This 4 week course looks at the cultural disconnect between our churches and our lives in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Why are our churches so focussed on Europe and North America? Why aren't the stories God at work in New Zealand heard more? It will be available from January 2025. The course uses

Jay Ruka's book *Huia Come Home* and an interview of Jay by Scottie Reeve and Spanky Moore. As with all EfM material there is an emphasis on theological reflection and how to apply learnings to our own ministries. The course will cost \$40 and participants will need a copy of *Huia Come Home*.

This course will be offered in early 2025 in Wellington and as a zoom course. If you would like to do this course please email [educationforministrynz@gmail.com](mailto:educationforministrynz@gmail.com) and Michael Crawford-Butler will put you in touch with a mentor.

To be offered outside of Wellington this course we need mentors. A lot of past mentors are unwilling to commit for a four year cycle of EfM but if you may be prepared to mentor a short course please contact Michael Crawford-Butler [educationforministrynz@gmail.com](mailto:educationforministrynz@gmail.com). Those who are not currently accredited mentors will need to attend mentor training in Wellington. Training in other centres will be provided if there is sufficient interest.

*Please distribute this newsletter widely amongst your networks in the community*





## Wellington Mentor Training



1pm, Friday 2May — 5pm Saturday 3 May 2025

Home of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay, Wellington

EfM is a way to continually deepen the journey with God in the company of a group which provides challenge and support and co-learning opportunities. It has both academic rigour and a holistic, grounded way of applying that rigour to the realities of 21<sup>st</sup> century life, living into what it means to be disciples of Christ in our particular time and context.

To support the life of EfM groups and provide for the possibility of new groups forming we need to have mentors who are trained in the skills needed to facilitate these co-learning groups

A mentor is not an expert, or a tutor, but a co-learner with group members who has the added group skills to ensure that a safe, honest, non-judgmental learning environment is fostered.

If you think that you might have what it takes to be a mentor, and/or are interested in stepping into the adventure that is EfM, fill in the [registration form](#) and come along to the training event in Wellington. (If the link doesn't work on your browser try [www.efm.org.nz/events](http://www.efm.org.nz/events). A word version is available from the administrator)

*Coming to the training does not commit you to being a mentor! Come, taste, and see!*

If you have questions or want more information email  
[Educationforministrynz@outlook.com](mailto:Educationforministrynz@outlook.com)

Registrations close on 18 April 2025



Education for Ministry  
Administrator: Michael Crawford-Butler  
62 Herewini St, Titahi Bay, Porirua 5022  
Phone 021 246 0672  
[educationforministrynz@outlook.com](mailto:educationforministrynz@outlook.com)



## *EfM 2025 Retreat Registration Form*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential \$385

Non-residential \$255

Please pay \$50 deposit to ANZ account 01-0535-0051971-00. Include your name and REUNION in reference data

I cannot attend but I would like to pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to assist someone else to attend

As well as paying my registration fee I would like to pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to assist someone else to attend

Donations over \$5 are tax deductible. Payment will be request in March 2025 and a receipt sent.

Please email to [educationforministrynz@outlook.com](mailto:educationforministrynz@outlook.com) or post to

Education for Ministry, 62 Herewini St, Titahi Bay, Porirua 5022

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