

Wellington Mentor Training



1pm, Friday 22 November — 5pm Saturday 23 November 2024

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 21st 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. 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

Registrations close on 8 November 2024

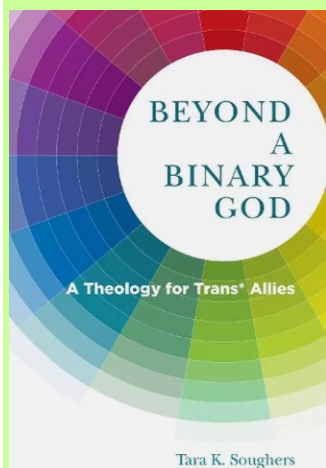
In this issue

- **Mentor Training**
- **Interlude material for 2024**
- **EfM retreat 2025**
- **Faith Grounded in the Whenua**
- **Treaty Principles Workshop**
- **Trainers Corner**



2024 Interlude Material

Beyond a Binary God



The first interlude book used in 2024 was Tara Sougher's *Beyond a Binary God: A Theology for Trans* Allies*. Tara is an EfM trainer and mentor in USA. In 2013 her child began a transition. Tara says "This is the book I wished had been available when I was struggling with theology in the context of learning to be a trans* ally." As a person who is not trans* Tara says she cannot write theology for trans* people but has produced a book to help those of us who wish to journey with those who are trans*.

It contains a long section on terminology which I found clarified much of my thinking. The chapter "Describing a Non-Binary God" contains a reminder that our trinitarian God is always one person or three persons—but never binary.

Beyond a Binary God Tara K Southers. Church Publishing New York. 120 pages

The 21 Elephants PodCast: Ancient Solutions



For the second interlude EfM New Zealand looked for some local content. We selected 5 episodes of The 21 elephants podcast looking at ancient solutions to modern problems. Although 5 years old the questions posed are still pertinent.

In the episodes used for the first week Reeve and Spanky Moore look at contemplative practices, mobile phones and silence, Christian consumerism and the role of liturgy.

The second week is an interview with Jay Ruka on the cultural disconnection in our churches. Why are our churches so focused on what comes from Europe and North America and so dismissive of what comes out of our own culture? This material will also be used in the 4 week course *Faith Grounded in the Whenua* which will be available from January 2025.

Links to the podcast and transcripts are on the EfM website [resources page](#).

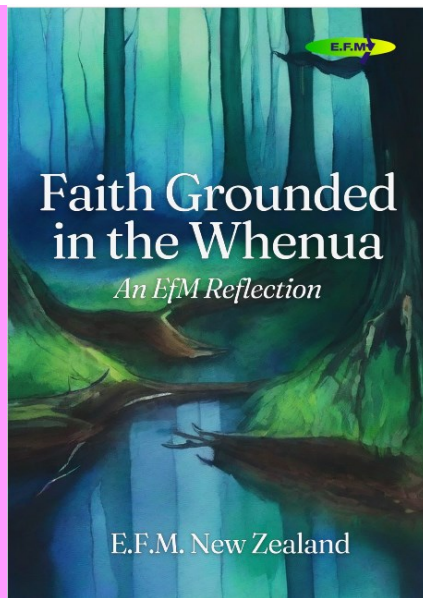
EfM Retreat 2025

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of EfM we are having a retreat at St Francis Retreat Centre, Hillsborough, Auckland from 10am Friday 15 August to 3pm Sunday 17 August 2025.

The retreat centre has beds for 39 people. There will also be some day only spaces available for those who live locally. The program is still under development. The cost will be between \$400 and \$500.

Registration will open in early 2025 but please put the dates in your diary.





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*.

But to offer 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. Those who are not currently accredited mentors will need to attend mentor training.



Treaty Principles Workshop

At the Kairos Training Day in Masterton on 15 September Judith and Roger Wigglesworth led a theological reflection workshop entitled **Treaty Principles: a Political and Faith Issue**. EfM teaches us to reflect from our faith perspectives on issues that are important in our daily lives. The Treaty Principles as a current issue, and a controversial topic, is one that we need to reflect on as people of the Gospel to discern what God is calling us to as followers of Christ and citizens of Aotearoa.

About 20 people attended, including some from other denominations, and shared their experiences. Everyone seemed to appreciate the way the process could be used to explore big issues.

Another workshop is being planned for Wellington in October or November. If you would like to offer this experience in your own town or city please contact Michael Crawford-Butler educationforministrynz@gmail.com.

Please distribute this newsletter widely amongst your networks in the community

Trainers' Corner

A place to find some ideas for EfM groups

This month's trainer's corner is written by Joshua Booher, Associate Director of EfM at Sewanee.

Group Covenant

Historically, I have a problem with group "norms" or "rules". The problem is that I believe the focus is in the wrong place. The focus is on correct and incorrect behaviors, which then leads to the mentor policing adult behavior. However, the underlying concept is valid. Groups need to have an intentional discussion of how we wish to live and work together for the well-being of the group. Therefore, what is a different approach that might be more in line with the heart of EfM?

I went through a Foundation Training of Trainers in 2009. On the staff was the Rev. Bud Holland who asked the question "What is a covenant?" I use this same question in the EfM groups that I mentor. The types of answers that arise are: an agreement between two parties, one party is of a higher status, each party agrees to do something, etc. Using these answers, I begin to build a covenant for the EfM group or training.

Once we have roughly defined a covenant, I ask the group why they signed up for EfM. What were they hoping to get out of the program or experience in the group? I write down these answers and they later serve two functions. First, they are what I agree to work towards. Knowing the goals of the participants enables me to pick worship experiences, onboard questions, TR starting points, and other exercises that move the group towards their stated goals. Second, the answers serve as Apply questions for the individual. For instance, if Jane says, "I want a closer relationship with God" as her reason for signing up for EfM, occasionally, when we are engaged in a TR and reach the Apply movement, I will ask her "After this conversation, do you feel closer or more distant from God?" My part in the covenant is to facilitate the group in ways that lead them towards their goals, which we have now defined.

Then, after briefly discussing that EfM is an adult education program and that everyone in the room has had academic success in the past, I ask "What helps you learn?" This question leads to answers like being prepared, showing up, asking questions, listening to others, etc. If they are not named, I will bring in some of the standards such as respecting others, warning us if they will be absent, etc. These answers become the second part of the covenant, which is what the participants agree to do.

Now, we have both parts of the covenant. If the participants agree to do what helps them learn, I, as the mentor, agree to lead the group in a way that will enable them to meet their goals. I make this agreement a verbal agreement. They have to say that they agree to these terms. I then respond by agreeing to my part.

However, this is not the end of the covenant. A covenant that sits in a folder is dead and useless. Even worse is a covenant that only comes out, when there are problems. It becomes a tool to bludgeon participants with, when the group is not running smoothly. Therefore, we need to make the covenant a living document.

To bring the covenant to life, on a routine basis, say monthly, use the covenant as your onboard discussion. Go through it line by line and ask "How are we doing with this item?" This gives the group a chance

to see where they are doing well and where they might need to focus more. You can also ask “What might we need to add, delete, or modify?” This is important since a group changes during its time together. What worked at the beginning of the year might not be what the group needs later in the year. So, ask the group to be open to changing its covenant. If a change is made, ask them to recommit to the covenant in its new form.

Finally, take as much time as it takes to get a strong covenant. Time spent early in the year can pay dividends later in the year in preventing problems. For instance, talk about things like: If a couple is in the group, what can they talk about at home. Their assumptions of the answer will likely differ from the other group members. If someone knows they will miss regularly, what does the group expect of them. (I usually find groups are fine with absences, if they know about them ahead of time and the person stays connected to the group.) Is alcohol allowed in any form in the group? Is needlework allowed in the group (crocheting or knitting)? Some people perceive this as not paying attention. Needleworkers often find it helps them concentrate better. So, where is the middle ground? Is the use of electronic devices (tablet, phone, etc) allowed in the group seminar? Quick searches are a great way to bring answers to the group, but is it disruptive? Many groups come to the conclusion that searches are fine as long as you share what you find and you don't get distracted by the device. Time spent on questions like these can allow the group to avoid misunderstandings and problems later in the year.

In the end, a covenant can be a way to move away from rule-based norms that require the mentor to police the actions of the participants. Instead, you have an agreement about how the group is going to operate that everyone has agreed to. Then, on a regular basis the covenant is revisited to remind us of our agreements and to make sure it continues to apply to where we are in our group's life.



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Carol Hughes attended the 2024 TEC convention in USA and ran into these EfMer's at their stall. From left to right Ven. Carol Hughes, Rev. Kevin Goodman (Executive Director), Donna Layne (Operations Coordinator), Bobbie Ashley (Registrar), Beth Cavey (Trainer in Residence) and Joshua Booher (Associate Director)

Scared Spaces of Wellington

On the next page is information on 3 church walks organized by Richard Norman and Sir David Moxon. Both these people have an association with EfM and we are pleased to advertise these but they are not organized by EfM



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SACRED SPACES of Wellington

3 Guided Walks through Wellington's spiritual history...

Discover histories of faith communities which have served Wellington since the 19th century.

Learn from guides with expertise in theology and organisation studies and from exploring architecture, art, beliefs and rituals distinctive to each community.

Don't miss this opportunity to venture behind doors which are often closed for security reasons.

Walk 1

Friday
November 1st
2pm - 5.30pm



BETH EL ORTHODOX SYNAGOGUE in Webb Street was founded in Wellington in 1843 for the Jewish faith, which dates back more than 3500 years. The Synagogue is a community and worship centre. This site features a kindergarten and houses the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand.



The **THEOSOPIICAL SOCIETY**, near Cuba Street, was founded in the United States in 1875 to explore questions such as 'Who am I? Why am I here? What is the purpose of life.'

The society encourages comparing religions to identify essential teachings.



The Anglican Church is represented by **ST PETER'S CHURCH**, Willis Street, built in native timbers in 1979 in the style of Gothic cathedrals. Anglicans have been in New Zealand since 1814 when Samuel Marsden established a mission station in the Bay of Islands. Unlike in Britain, it is not 'established' as an official state church.

REFRESHMENTS

6.00pm For those able to stay, self-funded meal will be available at St Peter's Garden Room to encourage continued discussion.



ST JOSEPH'S, Mt Victoria, for the involvement of the Catholic Church in the life of the crowded central city through education, health and welfare St Pat's College and the Home of Compassion were strongly linked with this parish, founded in 1913 and with a 2004 building.



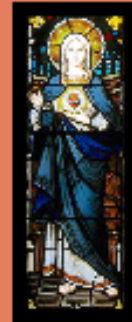
The **GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL**, Hania Street, Mt Victoria dates back to 1947, with the current building from 1970. It was built by Greek migrants, most of whom came to Wellington during the 1950s and 60s.



WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH began with Wellington's first service of Christian worship at Te Aro Pa in June 1839. The church building dates from 1880 and holds services in English, Fijian, Samoan and Tongan.

Walk 2

Saturday
November 2nd
9am - 12.15 pm



ST MARY OF THE ANGELS CATHOLIC CHURCH, Boulcott Street was founded in 1843 and the concrete Gothic church dates from 1922, largely completed by a parish priest and day labourers. It was fully restored between 2015-17.



WELLINGTON CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, began meeting in 1877, and at its Boulcott Street building in 1941. Central played host to the 1882 formation of the Baptist Union, which now has more than 250 churches around New Zealand.



ST JOHN'S PRESBYTERIAN, Willis Street dates from the early 1850s, and the building from 1885, when it was on the edge of the colonial town.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE, Willis Street, founded by Mary Baker Eddy in Boston, 1879; in New Zealand since 1914.

REFRESHMENTS

5.00 pm St Peter's Anglican Church, Willis Street. A debrief for those who wish to take part.

ABOUT THE WALKS

Cost per half day: \$40. www.eventfinda.co.nz

Tour Organiser: Dr Richard Norman, a member of Historic Places Wellington and St Peter's Anglican church, with work background of teaching human resource management and public sector management at Victoria University's School of Business and Government.

Theologian and guide: Sir David Moxon, from Hamilton, former Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia and former director of the Anglican Centre in Rome.