

NAPIER INNER-CITY CHURCHES
30TH ANNIVERSARY OF COVENANT

Press Release:

On Sunday 29 January 2017, four inner-city churches of Napier celebrated the 30th anniversary of an ecumenical covenant at a service at Trinity Methodist Church in Clive Square. The four churches include: St Paul's Presbyterian Church, St Patrick's Catholic Church (part of the Catholic Parish of Napier), Trinity Methodist Church, and the Waiapu Cathedral of St John the Evangelist.

These four churches prepare an annual Civic Service, to pray for the Napier City Council, the Hawkes Bay Regional Council, the local Member of Parliament; as well as the various communities of the city of Napier. Mayor Bill Dalton made an address to the service, thanking the churches for their role which at times helps remind the Council of its task to address particular needs and issues facing Napier's communities. Councillor Paul Bailey represented the Hawkes Bay Regional Council and Stuart Nash MP also attended.

30 years ago, in a newspaper article recording the original signing of the covenant, Monsignor Tim Hannigan of St Patrick's was quoted: "Basic human nature and bigotry over a long history have separated us. The Covenant is a more Christian way. The witness of the Christian church will be stronger because we are working together."

Rev Tony Franklin-Ross, current minister of Trinity Methodist, said, "Ecumenical covenants represent an important sign of Christian unity, but not as an interim step towards integration. It is, rather, invoking a serious commitment to a living process, a willingness to be faithful, to change and to be open and honest with each other. It is to have a focus on the mission and purposes of God."

Further, he said, "Over the 30 years, the Covenant between our four churches has become part of the living fabric of our churches and faith communities. It has become part of the DNA of these congregations. This is what comes from 30 years of being in a relationship with each other, sharing our parish lives when possible, and representing this in worship together; but importantly exploring what we together can do witness to God's vision of justice and peace in our diverse communities of Napier."

END

A Photo is attached and may be used:

- *Photo includes clergy of the four churches: Rev Sally Carter (St Paul's), Rev Tony Franklin-Ross (Trinity), Fr Peter Head (St Patrick's), and Rev David van Oeveren (St John's Cathedral).*

For further information:

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