

RUATARA

The magazine of Vaughan Park Anglican Retreat Centre || Number 2 || Summer 2019

**Religious leaders
eradicating
modern slavery**

**Meet this year's
Scholars**

**Retreat Programme
2019**

**Lily, the retreat
house cat**

From our Interim Director

Most of us take a look back at the past year before we welcome the birth of a new one. The old year needs our blessing, not least for all we learned, for all we loved and lost and for the ways in which it brings us to where we are now.

We said farewell to the Rev. Iain Gow who was no longer able to continue as Director of Vaughan Park because of ongoing health issues. We offer gratitude for his ministry and with the Diocese, we offer prayers for Iain's recovery and a restoration of wellness.

The Governance Board of Vaughan Park asked me to take on the role of Interim Director from 1st September and I shall continue in post until a new Director is appointed. I want to express my gratitude to our wonderful staff here. They are the most amazing group of people to work with and be alongside. Each one, in his or her own way, offers welcome, care, nurture and nourishment to our guests and to one another.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming old friends and new to Vaughan Park this year. The people who were awarded Scholarships in 2019 will be taking up residence throughout the year and you can read about them inside the magazine. Our Scholars enrich the life of Vaughan Park. We hope that they will love being part of our community as we shall enjoy their company.

Our inspirational 2019 Retreat Programme was launched in December. We feel very fortunate to have the highest calibre of retreat leaders and facilitators participating in this year's Programme and at the time of writing, we've already received bookings for many of the retreats.

The Ruatara Chapel, at the heart of Vaughan Park, now offers a daily rhythm of prayer – morning, midday and evening. Later this year, we intend to offer guided retreats for three and five days, Living the Liturgy of the Hours. Details will be published on our website, Facebook page and Twitter over the coming months.

We will also continue to offer Spiritual Companionship/Direction to those who seek a soul friend to accompany them.

So come visit us. Stay for a day or longer and enjoy all that this beautiful place and space can offer you.

From all of us at Vaughan Park, may you be blessed with a peace-filled New Year and may you be a blessing to others.

Hilary Oxford Smith



Ruatara


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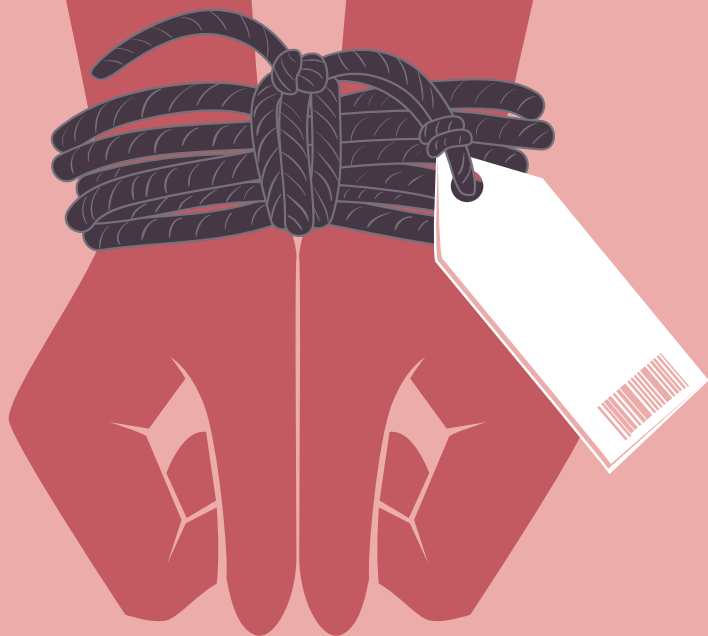


Book launch at Vaughan Park

Left: The Rev. Joy MacCormick (front right) and granddaughter Hayley MacCormick (front left) with the Rev. Erice Fairbrother (back left) and Valerie Thompson (back right) of EV Books at the book launch of *Against the Dark poems of resistance, reconciliation and hope* held at Vaughan Park on 2 October.

Our cover photo is by Mark Scowan Photography, copyright Vaughan Park Anglican Retreat Centre.

Religious leaders come together to eradicate modern slavery



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In late Spring, Archbishop Emeritus, Sir David Moxon delivered The Vaughan Park Sir Paul Reeves Memorial Lecture in association with Massey University. It was a clarion call to each one of us to contribute to making a difference in the interfaith struggle against human trafficking and modern slavery.

Sir David Moxon returned to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2017 after completing his appointment as Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative to the Holy See.

During his time there, the ecumenical focus of the Centre was on education and networking around modern slavery and human trafficking as well as aid and development work. Approximately 40.3 million people are victims of modern slavery. It is often elusive and successful, avoiding detection and prosecution.

In his lecture, Sir David said that Pope Francis, the Archbishop of Canterbury,

Justin Welby and other faith leaders of the world's major religions believed that faith-based communities had a role to play in supporting strategies to combat slavery. What resulted was a Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders against Modern Slavery being signed in Rome in 2014. The Declaration encouraged spiritual and practical action by all global faiths and people of goodwill to eradicate modern slavery across the world by 2020 and for all time.

"Whereas it might be assumed that the world's great faiths may have fundamentally different views of a theology of the human person or of human dignity or of oppression and the will of God," Sir David remarked, "the

opposite has proved to be the case. In the common declaration against slavery and trafficking we are seeing the higher spiritual insight and the shared enlightenment of the injustice and the patent evil that slavery and trafficking represent, through the eyes of mature, open faith."

This cause, he said, was one of the first times that the world's great faiths had agreed to work together in this way. It wasn't easy, he commented, and had taken much discussion and over six months to write. The declaration upholds shared values of compassion, justice seeking and freedom. Such common ground can mobilise people of good faith all over the world to be the generation that ends slavery for good.

Religious and spiritual leaders



Archbishop Emeritus, Sir David Moxon

from the Pacific Islands, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand have since gathered in Auckland in November 2018 to sign a Joint Declaration Against Modern Slavery and launch the Pacific Freedom Network.

A full transcript of Sir David's lecture is on our website <http://vaughanpark.org.nz/?sid=1191>.

He will also be leading a day seminar 'The faith based struggle against modern slavery and human trafficking globally and locally' on Saturday 17th August 2019 at Vaughan Park. You'll find more details in our Retreat Programme 2019 <https://vaughanpark.nz/events/2019-retreat-programme>

Vaughan Park Scholars Announced

Seven Scholarships have been awarded for 2019.

The annual international Residential Scholarship Programme, created by former Director, the Rev. John Fairbrother, offers people the unique opportunity to take some time out at Vaughan Park to study and work on a particular research, writing or artistic project for a period of one or two months. We are delighted to introduce the new Scholars to you.

Yvonne Ualesi, (Aotearoa) February

"I am so humbled and crying whilst reading this wonderful answer to prayer... I give thanks for such a wonderful opportunity. I am so encouraged," says Yvonne.

A New Zealand born Pasifika scholar of Samoan, Tokelauan and Fijian descent, Yvonne is a primary teacher and also a voluntary youth mentoring programmer in her local community of South Auckland. "Central to my practice in both teaching and youth mentoring, is my faith in God and sense of connectedness and relatedness to my aiga/family and building community connections," says Yvonne. Studying for a PhD at The University of Auckland, the project that Yvonne will be working on at Vaughan Park is called, *Culturally Sustaining and Responsive Youth Mentoring Practice in Aotearoa: Towards a Framework* and her month's residency will give her the opportunity to edit four studies that include the narratives of youth and cultural experts, youth themselves including their aiga/whānau/families and tutors and observations.



The Rev. Ben Johnson-Frow (Aotearoa) May

Ben is an ordained priest with 25 years experience in ministry and leadership in the Anglican Church spanning local, national and international contexts. He is currently the Vicar of St. John's Church in Johnsonville, Wellington. Ben has been writing, recording and arranging music for as long as he can remember. He has encouraged other musicians for ministry and his songs are used in worship in Aotearoa New Zealand and around the world. "The gift of time and space to pray, read, reflect and write songs in an inspiring place greatly appeals...but it also feels like there is something else bubbling away in my heart for songs that are a vulnerable and personal reflection of life, faith and ministry."



Jennifer Lewis, (USA) June-July

Jennifer is a PhD student in Practical Theology at Boston University. She heard about Vaughan Park when she spent three wonderful years living in Taupo and serving in the local Anglican church. Baptized in Lake Taupo and confirmed in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, she is currently seeking ordination in the Episcopal Church of the United States.

Her PhD research focuses on how aesthetic pedagogies and creative Christian practices can contribute to personal and social healing, as well as efforts of justice and peace. During her time at Vaughan Park, she would like to explore how one practice – imaginative prayer – might serve as a resource for healing trauma and help Christian communities draw on the resources of the faith so that they can respond to trauma in deliberate, organic and life-restoring ways and 'have life and have it to the full.'



Dr. Anne Shave (Aotearoa) March-April

Anne graduated this year with a PhD in Theology from The University of Otago, Aotearoa. She focused on the spiritual and pastoral needs of people in midlife and explored some of the gaps that currently exist in attending to the complex issues that arise for many people in the middle decades of life. She also identified a range of ways in which clergy and congregations could provide more intentional support to midlife members. Intending to complete a book based on her research while she is at Vaughan Park, Anne hopes that it will be a useful resource for church leaders and for Christians in midlife.



In our next edition of *Ruatara*, we are introducing a new regular column, **What you did next**. We'd love to hear from previous Scholars about their experiences since being resident at Vaughan Park. Where are you now, what are you doing? Please send us your news. hilaryoxfordsmith@vaughanpark.org.nz

**Marie Preston
(Aotearoa)
August**

Marie says that she has a story to write which she hopes will be an authentic, readable, accessible memoir and an accompaniment for many people in their professional and personal lives. As a registered Nurse and Midwife, and before that, a Plunket Nurse, her working life has been full, varied and people-related. Marie has lived for 25 years with the diagnosis and the many challenges of non-Hodgkin lymphoma and melanoma. The focus of her story, which she has been working on for some time, will be the encouragement of health, healing and wholeness. "Now is the time for me to companion and inspire others in their journeys of life and faith. To be given the opportunity to think, reflect, write and complete my book in the quiet space of Vaughan Park is like a dream come true."



**Mary Jane Miller
(Mexico)
September–October**

"Yippee, fantastic, I cannot believe it...I am grateful beyond words to have been given this opportunity." Mary Jane is an icon painter and teacher. She is an active member and on the vestry of St. Paul's Anglican Church in San Miguel de Allende where she lives.



For the past 25 years, her reverence for creation and prayer has led her to study the ancient iconography egg tempera technique. This sacred art form integrates past and present, earth and divine, flesh and spirit. Egg tempera is a recipe combining egg yolk – symbolizing the raw potential for life – with million-year old dirt – symbolic of eternity. Mixing life's potential with eternity creates human portraits for spiritual awe. The practice resonates with Mary Jane personally and spiritually, illustrating her love of nature, life and God.

At Vaughan Park she is hoping to design and paint four of a series of 12 icons called "On Holy Ground" exploring Christ's teaching to love and care for what we have been gifted and expressing the beauty of creation in a style which diverts from traditional icon imagery. "I am also looking forward to the possibility of offering an iconography workshop while I am at Vaughan Park," says Mary Jane. So are we!

**Nicola Hoggard Creegan,
(Aotearoa)
November–December**

Nicola is a theologian and a graduate from Drew University, New Jersey, USA. She married a fellow graduate student and taught and lived in North Carolina for 12 years before returning to Aotearoa New Zealand. She is an active member of All Saints' Anglican Church, Ponsonby, Auckland, where she is on the vestry, a liturgist and a bell ringer.



She taught theology for 17 years and directed TANSA, (Theology and the Natural Sciences in Aotearoa). Nicola is now co-directing New Zealand Christians in Science (funded for three years by the Templeton Foundation), and is an honorary chaplain at Maclaurin Chapel at The University of Auckland.

"My research has always involved the multiple interactions between systematic theology and science, especially evolutionary theory," says Nicola. "This has taken me into eco-theology and the theology of healing as well as the problem of evil and free will."

She published *Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil* in 2013 and co-edited (with Andrew Shepherd) *Creation and Hope: Reflections on Anticipation and Action from Aotearoa, New Zealand* in 2018.

Nicola completed her PhD dissertation on free will (and compatibilism) in Jonathan Edwards and Friedrich Schleiermacher in 1990. Nearing the completion of a book project on free will, Nicola says that she will greatly benefit from a period of quiet and concentration at Vaughan Park to bring this project to its conclusion.

How to apply for an international Vaughan Park Scholarship 2020

We are inviting applications for three residencies of two months in March–April, June–July and September–October 2020.

There are also four Scholars, Writers and Artists one month residencies in February, May, August and November 2020.

Applications (which close on 4th September 2019) should be made in writing to the Scholarship Grants Committee of the Vaughan Park Governance Board and should include:

- a short biography
- an abstract and/or portfolio and the overall context of the project
- a date preference
- references from two referees

Take a look at the Scholarships page on our website to find out more. <https://vaughanpark.nz/scholarship2>

The Bookshelf

BUT WHAT IF SHE'D SAID NO?

Catherine E. Laufer

The stories (and two poems) in this collection seem deceptively simple. They could be read at one level, simply for enjoyment (the longest is 18 small pages), without noticing the deep humanity and wisdom and scholarship on which they are based. Cathy has helpfully provided two language glossaries and a postscript – the latter providing some basic background to the stories. With typical Cathy humour, she begins the postscript succinctly: “Explaining a story is akin to explaining a joke: the point is usually lost.” True! But her postscript is the gateway to a deeper appreciation, especially for the story Meir and Khamet and the poem Anastasis.

The motivation for the title story is foreshadowed, appropriately, in the subversively titled “First Temptation” (which is definitely not in the Garden of Eden); and followed through by “Women at the Well”. Each is simply and poignantly told, with the humanity of the characters shining through. Nevertheless, as good stories do, it left me wondering. First, why on earth did Mary say yes? And second – hoping Cathy will rise to this in a second collection – what in the council of heaven (implicit in “First Temptation”) convinced Gabriel to go on such a desperate most-unlikely-to-succeed mission? After all, God had sent prophets on missions fruitless in their day; so why would an angel, even a high-ranking one, have any better hope of success with a devout carefully-chosen individual?

My favourite story? Two stand out for me. Her final story, “Indefinitely delayed”, is just lovely. But the one I found most deeply moving is “Holy Mystery”. After the Stabat Mater, how did his mother get to know of her Son’s resurrection? Luke the Evangelist presses her for details

I congratulate Cathy on her stories, and hope they will enrich many spiritual lives. As a former Vaughan Park Scholar myself, I am very grateful to Vaughan Park’s Scholarship Program that provides opportunity for such time “away” that may in many and various ways provide rich sustenance beyond its boundaries. Congratulations, Cathy!

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AGAINST THE DARK

*poems of resistance,
reconciliation and hope*

Joy MacCormick with
Hayley MacCormick

This is book of poetic wisdom, speaking truth, asking questions, inviting reflection and discernment, gifting empathy, comfort and consolation, courage and hope.

Ten years ago, Joy was awarded an international Vaughan Park Scholarship. The Scholarship is gifted to nurture the work and expression of writers, artists and musicians from Aotearoa New Zealand and around the world. Her beautifully written first book, *Moments of Grace: Reflections on Meeting with God* was birthed at Vaughan Park and subsequently published in 2012.

Joy also served as a Priest Assistant here for some years and we at Vaughan Park have much affection and love for her and are thankful for what she offered to us and to those she encountered in her generous and open spirituality and ministry. Her connection with Vaughan Park and our connection with Joy continue in the retreat ministry that she now offers here each year and which we value very much.

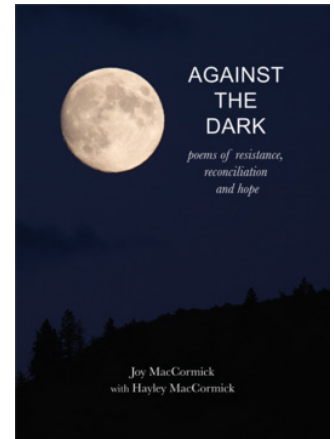
And The Muse has inspired her to write a second book – this time in collaboration with her granddaughter Hayley, bringing together the grace of awakening and the freshness and vulnerability of youth with the experience and wisdom of age.

Against the Dark is an accompaniment on the journey of life...for those with much faith, those with little faith, those exploring what faith might mean to them, and those with no faith.

There is a spaciousness in this book – inviting reflection and heightening awareness, encouraging us to search inwards and look outwards, to find mutual bonds of connectedness with our sisters and brothers in all the world.

It is a book for personal reflection and devotion; it is also one which is full of rich resources, to be shared in group reflection and conversation, on retreats and in worship.

The Rev Dr Michael Trainor, a former Scholar of Vaughan Park and Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne, Australia, has also commended *Against the Dark*. He wrote, “this book touches the deepest recesses of the human spirit. It opens the heart



Continues on next page >

Retreat Programme 2019

Our Retreat Programme for 2019 was launched in early December. It's full of exciting and diverse themes. Take a look at what's on offer to support and inspire your journey of discovery, transformation, faith, creativity, wellness or curiosity. We'll also be offering some additional day retreats and seminars throughout the year and these will be posted on our website, Facebook page and Twitter.



Kelp Koru ©Iain Sargeant

16th February

Soul Collage® Prayer Cards
Jenny Johnson

9th - 10th March

Celtic Spirituality: Ancient Wisdom for Today's World
Dr. Hilary Oxford Smith and Julie Saraswati

13th April

Companioning Those Who Are Grieving
Dr. Hilary Oxford Smith

10th - 11th May

Memoirs of a Follower
Marion Sanders

14th - 16th June

Hermits, Anchorites and Sacred Consecrated Lives
The Rev. Erice Fairbrother SCL

27th July

Ecumenical Day: Gifts of Gratitude and Grace
A collaboration between Te Ngakau Waiora Mercy Spirituality Centre and Vaughan Park

3rd August

Soul Collage® For Self-Discovery
Jenny Johnson

17th August

The faith based struggle against modern slavery and human trafficking globally and locally
Sir David Moxon

31st August

Introduction to Meditation in the Christian Tradition
Vincent Maire

26th September

Towards the Light
The Rev. Joy MacCormick

8th - 10th November

Labyrinths in the Sand
Sally Longley

to identify the truths that we face, the tragedies that we are well aware of and the delights for which we long. It is a balm for our spirits with its simple but profound language and wordplay and brings the human experience into dialogue with biblical texts and images. This book emerges from a well of deep faith. Don't just read it, Linger with it."

Joy and Hayley – you have written a book that strengthens our resilience, opens our hearts and minds to the value of and opportunities for reconciliation and peace, anchored in hope. Thank you.

© Rev. Dr. Hilary Oxford Smith

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MOMENTS is the online gateway to the contemplative life of Vaughan Park. This blogpage on our website, offers an emerging collection of articles, poetry, meditations, prayers and liturgies from international writers. It reflects the richness and diversity of Christian and multi-faith spirituality, ecumenical inclusivity and a deepening encounter with the world and its people.

The Curator and Editor, Dr. Hilary Oxford Smith is happy to connect with new and established writers, poets and liturgists who would like to explore the possibility of sharing their work with our international readership.



God who sends cats (especially for Moira Finley)

God, who sends cats,
thank you for hearing a sad prayer,
and for the surprise curled on my bed,
come through the window,
who is Lily the retreat house cat.
I, who have loved dogs so long,
hesitated –
am I too friendly?
will she want to be more independent?
would she like cream,
or think I'm profiling her?
But I am so lonely for family,
and ambushed by a predator grief
as the evening closes in,
and what you had at holy hand
was a black cat --
rough purrs, scratch-able ears
the infinity path of ankle weaving, --
willing to stay the night --
and leave as morning dawned,
after cream.
Help me, God, now and always,
to trust that you listen,
and recognize your answer,
always keeping my window open
for the unexpected,
and help me also be aware,
that you may need me to interrupt
the glorious prowling
of my life,
to be the stray love
in someone else's lonely night.

© Maren Tirabassi

She's the cat's whiskers

Saint Francis is the patron saint of animals and we hope that, with our Franciscan heritage here at Vaughan Park, he would be pleased to know that Lily the cat has found her way into our hearts and has found her forever home.

She turned up at the main door about a year ago. We didn't know who she belonged to so we took her to the local vet for a check up and the microchip revealed where she lived. We contacted her owner who suggested shared custody of her. Then the owner left town. The staff had a meeting to discuss the pros and cons of having a cat about the place and they all voted to welcome Lily as the retreat house cat.

She's super-cute, has a beautifully placid nature and brings joy and smiles to guests and staff alike. Lily



spent a lot of time in the company of the Rev. Maren Tirabassi, our Resident Scholar for October who was inspired to write these words about our little feline angel.

Hands Across Oceans

Vaughan Park's collegial links with countries and people around the globe, online and in person, has over the years facilitated mutual values, dialogue and cherished friendships.

We enjoy formal links with Vaughan Park friends and supporters in

Australia, the United Kingdom, USA and Canada: The Rev. Martin Davies (Australia), The Rev. Gary Colville (UK), The Rev. Dr Ellen Clark-King (USA) and David Eyles (Canada).

This month, we are very much looking forward to welcoming back David Eyles and the Rev. Gary Colville to Vaughan Park. We hope that they will enjoy blessings of rest and refreshment.

We would love to make more formal connections around the world. Does Vaughan Park have a special place in your heart? Might you like to forge greater links with us and with the people who live where you are? Please be in touch with Hilary, our Interim Director if you would like to have a conversation about possibilities. director@vaughanpark.org.nz.